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PLUCK AND LUCK

THE BOY OF DONNYBROOK

OR A LORD FOR A YEAR

(A STORY OF IRELAND)

AND OTHER STORIES

By ALLYN DRAPER



He seized a chair, dashed out the candles with it, and then commenced laying about him with the greatest fury. Lady Craven was the first to dash out of the room, as she exclaimed: "The boy is mad."

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PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure

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The Boy of Donnybrook

—OR—

A LORD FOR A YEAR

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CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE COMBAT.

It all happened in the Emerald Isle about sixty years ago. There were wild lads in that country in those days, and they had their full fling at dueling, horseracing, fighting with blackthorns, and other pleasant diversions.

Who has not heard of Donnybrook Fair, where the boys of Dublin and the surrounding country had a splendid time for a week or so every year, and where unbounded merriment was the order of the hour?

On a certain night in the spring of the year, a young gentleman ran out of a grand old mansion situated not very far from Donnybrook, and he then darted across the lawn as if inspired by some crazy impulse.

Having reached the deep wood at the end of the lawn, the half-crazed young man kept on at headlong speed until he reached the bank of a deep flowing river.

Without a moment's hesitation, and without uttering a single word, the young fellow plunged in headforemost, and he soon disappeared in the dark water.

Very few moments elapsed before a head arose above the water again, while its owner beat about wildly with his arms, as he yelled aloud, in frantic tones:

"Help, help, or I'll drown. Oh, save me, save me, as I have changed my mind and I don't want to die now!"

The cry for help was scarcely raised when a rugged form darted out of the wood and then plunged in to the rescue of the drowning man, while a merry voice rang out, crying:

"Thunder and turf, if it is not Lord Craven!"

The last speaker had scarcely plunged in, when a large, shaggy dog darted into the water after him, uttering a friendly salute.

In less than two minutes after the two men and the dog were safe on the bank, and they were all panting from their exertions.

The young man who had attempted suicide did not offer to thank his rescuers when he recovered his breath, but he flung himself on the ground, as he groaned aloud:

"Oh, Dan, Dan, why did you save me, as I wanted to die so much?"

The rough-looking customer cast a scornful glance down at the young lord, as he asked, in droll tones:

"Then why in the mischief didn't you die in peace while you were about it, and not call on any one for help?"

The dog gave a savage growl at the thankless fellow on the ground and then made a snap at one of his legs.

With a yell of rage and pain the prostrate youth sprang to his feet, and darted behind the animal's master, crying:

"Death and furies, are you going to let him tear me to pieces?"

Making a motion to his dog to keep off, the rough fellow turned on the young gentleman, as he demanded:

"What ails you anyhow, Lord Craven?"

The miserable young man put his hands to his eyes, as he sobbed aloud:

"Oh, Dan, Dan, I am the most wretched being on earth to-day, and I wish I were dead."

Dan caught the young fellow by the shoulders and dragged him towards the edge of the water, as he cried:

"That is easily settled. Keep back, Raun, as I can settle with him."

Lord Craven struggled as well as he could, as he cried in tremulous tones:

"What do you mean to do, Dan?"

"Fling you into the river again, of course. 'Tis a pity not to let such a poor fellow as you not have your way, and on my conscience I'll not wet my clothes for such a cur again."

With a violent effort Lord Craven broke away from his droll friend, as he cried:

"Don't be a fool, Dan. Oh, if you only knew the trouble I am in to-night."

Drawing a flask from his pocket Dan handed it to the young lord, saying:

"Take a drain of that and then tell me what ails you, ye born fool."

The young lord did take a drain out of the flask and then handed it back to his friend, saying:

"I am awful thankful, Dan! Oh, if I had only your pluck what a happy man I would be."

The half-ragged before him shrugged his shoulders as he took a drain from the flask and then said, in sarcastic tones:

"On my soul, you are to be pitied, my fine lord. Take it easy now, and tell me what is troubling you at all."

"Oh, I'm in such a lot of horrible scrapes, I don't know where to begin to tell you. They mean to murder me, and I know it too well."

Dan sneered at the coward before him, as he asked:

"Who means to murder you?"

"Lady Craven and her friends."

"Then why don't you turn them all out, box and dice?"

The young lord groaned again ere he responded in piteous tones:

"Do you know how I am situated up at the hall, Dan?"

"I don't know much about you only from what I can hear, and that isn't to your advantage."

"What do you hear, then?"

"I hear that you are an impudent puppy and a tyrant to the poor servants and stableboys. I hear that you are led by the nose by your step-mother, Lady Craven. I hear that you are bullied and browbeaten by your equals and by your step-brother, Dick Craven."

Young Lord Craven made a motion as if to stop the cata-

logue of his failings, but his rough friend shook his hand in his face as he continued:

"Don't stop me or I'll break your face. In one word, you are a mean hound in every sense of the meaning. You have not a spark of decency in you, except when you are drunk, and then you are a boastful, bullying, lying scoundrel, and you cringe out of all the promises and boasts you make when you get sober. Dare you look me in the face and say I am uttering a word of a lie?"

"I fear it is all true, Dan, but I am such a miserable wretch that you ought to pity me, and you my half-brother."

"Your half-brother, am I? Faith, it's the first time in four long years that you even spoke a civil word to me, you miserable, mean hound. It is true that your father was my father also, and while he lived he did not forget that I was alive, but—"

"Oh, Dan, Dan, I will not forget you hereafter! It was all my step-mother's doings, as she would not allow any assistance to be given to you."

"Who asked her or you for assistance? While my father lived, although he hadn't the manhood to marry (my poor dead mother, he treated me half like a son. He gave me a fair allowance, a good education, and he had always a kindly word for me. But how has it been since he died?"

"It was all my step-mother's doings."

"Go to thunder, you cringing cur. Was it your step-mother hindered you from giving me a civil word or nod when we met on the road or at the fair. Have you not lashings of money at your command, and did you ever offer the Boy of Donnybrook a pound or a penny? Did you not know that I was often dry and hungry, while the same blood was running in our veins, and did you ever ask me up to the kitchen or the hall to satisfy my hunger? Did you not know that I got into a few scrapes with the police through my wild pranks, and did you ever offer your influence to get me out of them?"

"It is all my step-mother's fault."

Dan cast a pitying glance at the miserable young wretch before him as he continued:

"Now tell me quietly what made you try to take your own life to-night."

"Why, Dan, my life is threatened on all sides. You know that I will not be of age for one year yet, and my step-mother is my guardian. If I am put out of the way her son Dick will be entitled to my title and my estates. At the present moment she has set two fighting fiends at me, and I am in for a duel, a desperate leap over the iron gate, and a breakneck steeplechase."

"A duel, a leap over an iron gate, and a breakneck steeplechase. Why, man alive, if I was in your place those are the very things I would delight in."

"But you are such a brave fellow, Dan. Every one knows that you have not your equal in courage and daring around here. Oh, if you could only fight my cousin, Jack Burke, for me in the morning."

"Then you are engaged to fight the fire-eater, Jack Burke, in the morning?" asked the Boy of Donnybrook, eagerly.

"That I am. We had a quarrel to-night after supper and he flung a glass of wine in my face. Then I flung a decanter at him and knocked him down, and before I knew where I was a duel with pistols was all arranged for daylight in the morning. I know I will be shot; and they say that drowning is the easiest death going. Oh, why didn't you let me drown while I was about it?"

"There is nobody hindering you now. But just tell me the rest of your troubles before you jump in."

"I will, I will, Dan. Do you know Captain Slasher?"

"Do you mean the English gentleman jockey who rode at the Curragh last year?"

"That's the man. To-night, before the quarrel came off, and I was excited with wine at the time, I swore that I had a horse in my stable that could beat any other animal in the world at a high jump. Captain Slasher took me up and I was in for it. The other villains at the table urged us on, and it was agreed that we should jump over the iron gate leading from the stable out on the lawn on the day after to-morrow."

"Do you go over the gate together?"

"Not at all, and that is the worst of it. It was agreed that we should toss for the lead, and I must make the venture first. If I fail Captain Slasher wins the bet, which is for one thousand pounds each."

"I think the black horse Fairplay can do it, although it is a very ticklish leap."

"The black horse may do it, as he is the best jumper in the country, but I could never sit on his back while he was facing at it. The truth of the matter is, Dan, that there is a conspiracy on foot to put me out of the way. Then there is the desperate steeplechase over the worst jumps and water leaps in the whole country set down for Monday next, and for two thousand pounds a side at that. If I should have the good luck to escape them all, they will put up other games on me, or have me shot from behind a hedge before long. Oh, Dan, Dan, you are the only friend I have in the world! Save me! save me! and I'll swear to do full justice to you when I become of age."

"Shut up, bad cess to you, as I have something to offer that will save you."

"Oh, can you save me, Dan?"

"I can, and I will if you will do as I say."

"I will do anything in the world you say, Dan, only get me out of the terrible scrapes I am in."

"There is only one way to save you that I can see, and that is to let me take your place for one year."

"You are humbugging, Dan. How in the mischief could you take my place for a year, I would like to know?"

"Easy enough. Let me fix up in your clothes, shave this rough beard off my face, and I'll bet my life that I'll pass for you any day. Don't you remember when your father lived, and I was better clothed than I am now, how often it was remarked that we look alike?"

"I do—I do, Dan," eagerly replied the young lord. "I am willing to be a chimney sweep for a year if I can only have an easy mind," eagerly replied the young lord, his eyes brightening on the moment.

"Then solemnly swear that you will take my place for a year and that you will let me take yours without interfering with me in any way."

"I solemnly swear to do as you ask, my brother, and that I will not interfere with you in any way at all."

CHAPTER II.

COMMENCING HIS NEW CAREER.

After discussing the change for a little while the two young men started through the wood toward Craven Hall, when the big dog suddenly darted forward and caught a rabbit, which he at once placed at the feet of his master.

Lord Craven looked at the dog and then attempted to pat him on his head, but the fierce animal gave a snarl and made a snap at him, while Dan cried, placing his hand on his brother's shoulder at the same time:

"Be quiet, Raun. This is a friend of mine, and he is going to be your master for a while, too."

"Raun, Raun," repeated Lord Craven. "What a queer name your dog has, Dan. Do you think the dog will follow me hereafter?"

"I am sure he will when I give him a little friendly advice. Let us get into your private rooms now as quick as you can."

In less than half an hour afterwards the change was effected in the private apartment of the young lord.

Taking the razor which he had used in shaving himself, the Boy of Donnybrook cut a slight gash in his hand.

Seizing the hand of his brother, who trembled for the time, he also drew the blood therefrom.

Then clasping the bleeding hands together, Dan held them to the nose of the sagacious dog as he said, patting the animal on the head at the same time:

"Now, Raun, my good boy, I want you to follow him until I call you again, and be true to him as you were to me."

The dog smelled at the hands, looked up at his old master's face, and then planted one paw on the breast of his new master, and wagged his tail in approval.

The new lord then pointed to the door as he said, in imperious tones.

"It is time for you to be off now. I will show you to the back door, and the dog will lead you to the hut in the wood where I have lived for four years."

The two brothers then slipped down a private stairs, and Raun was soon leading his new master to the miserable little hut in the wood.

Lord Craven, as we will hereafter call him, then flung himself on the bed as if overpowered by wine, and he was soon in a sound slumber.

It seemed to him that he had not slept ten minutes, when

a rough voice fell on his ear while a rougher hand shook him violently.

Starting up for a moment and forgetting where he was, Lord Craven cried:

"What in thunder is the matter now? Sure the fight is not to come off until to-morrow."

A rough, black-bearded man was standing at his bedside, and he replied:

"You are mistaken, my lord. It is for daybreak this morning, and you have scarcely a minute to spare."

Another glance of Lord Craven at the man, and the former not only recognized his position, but the person at his bedside as well.

It was Captain Slasher, a somewhat famous sporting gentleman who did not bear a very good reputation on the turf.

As Lord Craven made no effort to rise, Captain Slasher seized him again and dragged him from the bed, crying:

"Take a little brandy and soda to steady your nerves, and let us hasten down to the grove. I see that you are a little shaky."

"Oh, Slasher, good Captain Slasher, is there no way out of this horrid affair?"

"By Jove, no: you will have to fight, and I am sorry to say that Jack Burke is the best shot I ever met. But brace up and drink this. You have about one chance in a hundred of escaping, but you may be a lucky dog, after all."

Carrying out the imitation to perfection, the young man staggered downstairs with his second, and then he was fairly dragged through the wood to the dueling ground, which was not more than a mile away.

When they arrived on the spot a dozen spectators awaited them, all of whom were recognized by the present Craven as friends of his step-mother.

When the pistol was placed in his hand, and he saw his opponent before him, the cowardly lord appeared to be seized with the courage of desperation, as he grasped the weapon with a firm hand and cried:

"If I must die I'll do my best to hit him, anyway."

Dan knew that he was a splendid shot with the pistol, and he had no more fear of the result of the duel than if engaged in a bout with the firsts with some village opponent.

His opponent was a noted fire-eater and a crack shot, who had been engaged in several affairs of the kind.

The word was at length given. Both of the pistols went off at the same instant, and each of the men fell to the ground.

Jack Burke gave a yell of pain, uttering a fearful imprecation at the same time, and clapped his hands to his leg, yelling:

"Blast the fool, he has winged me."

Lord Craven groaned as if in his dying agony as he moaned forth:

"Oh, mercy, mercy, I am a dead man. Heaven have mercy on my soul."

The surgeons present then hastened to make the usual examinations, with the following results:

Fighting Jack Burke had received a wound in the right leg, which would make him a cripple for life.

Lord Craven had not been hit at all.

The young lord laughed in his sleeve as he received the congratulations of his pretended friends, some of whom declared that he stood fire like an old veteran.

Among those who congratulated him was his step-brother, Dick Craven, a sly young fellow of eighteen, who was noted among his companions as a splendid boxer.

Although Dick was two years younger than his step-brother, he was fully as tall and as strong, and possessing considerable courage, he often thrashed the young lord.

When Dick approached the duellist there was a sneer on his face, as he said:

"'Pon my honor you surprise me! I thought at one time that you would fall in a faint before you fired. It must have been a chance shot."

The young lord felt like having it out then and there with the bully, but he reasoned that it would not be well to rush matters, and he replied:

"Let me alone, as I have had enough of fighting for one day, I am sure."

When he arrived at the hall for breakfast his step-mother received him as if rejoiced at his escape.

At the breakfast-table he noticed a charming young lady who treated him with the utmost scorn, and he knew that the proud damsel was Lady Craven's niece, whose name was Rose Dashwood.

After breakfast was over the young lord strolled out into the stable-yard, and putting on insolent airs to the men there he ordered them to saddle Fairplay and bring him forth.

He knew that his brother was an awkward rider, and he imitated him as he rode across the lawn and away out of sight over the hill.

Having measured the high iron gate with his eye, the brave fellow rode into a deserted spot and commenced to try the powers of the horse at some high leaps.

Fairplay was a noble animal, and the young man was thoroughly satisfied with his performances.

As he rode back toward the hall he chuckled to himself again, as he muttered:

"By all that is merry, but I am commencing well, but I must keep back and play the game with great caution."

CHAPTER III.

THE PROGRESS OF THE YOUNG LORD.

During the whole day the young lord kept up the game in the best manner possible.

During his movements through the hall he had noticed a pretty country girl who was acting as a waiting maid to Rose Dashwood, and whose name was Sally Malone.

Meeting Sally in one of the upper halls in the dusk of the evening, the young man spoke to her in a friendly manner, stole his arm around her waist, and gave her a sly kiss in the bargain.

The young girl started as if shocked at the salute, and she then bounded away, crying:

"What is coming into the young lord at all? Why, he never looked straight at me before in his life."

There were several visitors at the house at the time, and among them was Captain Dashwood.

The captain appeared to be a special favorite with Lady Craven, and it was whispered in the neighborhood that the gay widow had her eye on him as her second husband.

While over their wine that night, the young lord noticed that Captain Slasher was very impertinent in his remarks to him, and that he kept harping and sneering about the duel and the great jumping match which was to take place on the following day.

While pretending to drink freely of the wine, the young lord kept his senses about him, but he soon commenced to bluster and brag in the most furious manner.

Dick Craven sneered at him all the while, also as if anxious to provoke him to a fistic encounter on the spot.

The young lord's heart was throbbing to meet the pair of them, but he felt that he must act in a cautious manner, and he waited until he had time, as it were, to get uproariously drunk, and then he commenced to play his game.

He knew that his cowardly brother would fight when mad with wine; and he resented a remark made to him by Dick with a stinging blow between the eyes that sent him reeling to the floor.

Dick sprang to his feet crying, in a fearful rage:

"You must have it out with me on the spot, and no cringing out of it as you did before."

The young lord raved and blustered and declared that he was ready to have it out on the spot.

A ring was soon formed and at it the two brothers went with all the fury of rival boxers.

In less than five minutes Dick Craven was badly beaten, while his face was so disfigured with cuts and bruises that even his own mother could not recognize him at the moment.

While some of the guests were applying raw meat to the face of the defeated youth, the young lord kept on blustering, and drinking wine at the same time."

He then turned to Captain Slasher, holding a glass of wine in his hand, as he cried:

"Confound you for a cheat and a humbug, you have been insulting me all the night, also, and take that."

And the apparently infuriated young man dashed the wine on the face of the gallant captain, following it up with a rattling blow between the eyes.

Some of the guests sprang between them, while one or more cried:

"Another meeting, by Jove!"

The young lord blustered more and more, and then cried: "Yes, yes, let us have another fight with the pistols. I'll fight him across the table if he likes, for my blood is up now, hang him!"

At that moment Lady Craven burst into the room, crying: "What is all this turmoil about in here?" Then her eye fell on the battered face of her son and she sprang toward him, crying:

"What brute did this?"

Dick Craven pointed to the young lord, saying:

"It was he who did it."

The infuriated lady then turned on her stepson as if she would spring at him and tear his eyes out, when he darted to the other side of the table, crying:

"How often did he beat me, and you never said a word against it. I tell you I will not stand any more of this nonsense in my own house, even if I am not of age. You all treat me here as a cowardly child and I won't have it any longer."

As the young Lord Craven spoke he seized a chair, dashed out the candles with it, and then commenced laying about him right and left with the greatest fury.

Lady Craven was the first to dash out of the room, as she exclaimed:

"The boy is mad, and we will have to put him in a straight-jacket."

The young lord did not stop his work with the chair until it was smashed into pieces, and all his guests were either stretched on the floor or flying in dire dismay.

He then slipped quietly up to his bedroom, and his chuckle was deeper and merrier than ever.

After safely securing his door and placing a pair of pistols under his pillow, the Boy of Donnybrook stretched himself to sleep again, little fearing any molestation during the night.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEAPING MATCH.

After a late breakfast at Craven Hall a private consultation was held regarding the extraordinary conduct of the young lord.

Lady Craven presided at the meeting, and Captain Slasher acted as her general adviser.

Dick Craven was there also, his face presenting a very beautiful picture for a drawing-room, indeed.

Captain Slasher's eyes were also highly embellished, and his large nose had a lump on it just where the eyebrows met.

The only other person present at the consultation was the fire-eating Jack Burke, who was stretched on a bed, while the others were gathered around him.

After discussing the matter and receiving several proposals, Lady Craven, as the leading spirit, said:

"What is the use in talking, gentlemen, there is a fearful change for the worse in the young wretch, and I cannot understand it."

"Get him drunk and let him break his neck in trying to leap the black horse over the gate," suggested Captain Slasher, "and then I'll win a thousand pounds besides."

Lady Craven hesitated a moment as if in deep thought, and then responded:

"Well, well, I suppose we will have to let him try the jump. If he is tipsy when he rides at the gate he will be certain to clear it."

Captain Slasher then winked at Dick Craven as he remarked in a low voice:

"If the puppy is drunk enough to make the venture over the gate, we can find some means of balking the horse at the jump."

At the hour of noon Lord Craven did not show up at the hall, and his enemies were more puzzled than ever.

It wanted but a quarter of an hour of the appointed time, when the young lord emerged from the wood, crossed the lawn, and entered the stable-yard where Captain Slasher, Dick Craven and several of their friends had assembled to witness the contest.

One glance at the young gentleman was sufficient to show them that he was under the influence of liquor.

Striding up to Captain Slasher, and pulling out his watch at the same time, he cried:

"The hour is at hand, Captain Slasher, and I am ready for the trial."

One of the gentlemen present, who had been appointed judge in the contest, pulled his watch out of his pocket, and then remarked:

"It is time now, Lord Craven, as it wants but five minutes to two."

The young lord ran to the very gate he was engaged to spring over, and gave a loud hunting cry through the iron bars.

The cry was soon responded to from the wood beyond, and then out on the lawn came the horse, accompanied by a dozen rough-looking fellows, among whom could be recognized Dan Dolan, the well-known Boy of Donnybrook, with his dog Raun.

As the horse and the rough fellows approached the stable-yard Captain Slasher turned a little pale and inquired of the young lord:

"Who are those fellows coming here with the horse?"

A sly smile appeared on the half-tipsy face as the young man replied:

"My body-guard, of course. Did you think I was going to let you play any of your English tricks on me to-day? Not I, by gad."

The young lord then staggered toward his new friends, and addressed them, saying:

"See here, my lads, I got my friend and relative, Dan Dolan, there, to engage you to-day to see that I get fair play, and I know you will give it to me for his sake."

The gang flourished their sticks, and then rang out the cries:

"Lord Craven forever, and Dan Dolan, the Boy of Donnybrook, at his back."

The new Boy of Donnybrook had been under instructions during the morning, and as he was a cunning and clever fellow in his way, he played his part well.

With his face all begrimed with earth, his matted hair in thorough disorder, and his old hunting cap pulled down to his eyes, none of his old friends could recognize the late lord of the hall in the now Boy of Donnybrook.

Indeed, so well did each of the young men play their parts, that their compact was still a profound secret to all their mutual friends and foes.

At the appointed hour the judge of the contest pulled out his watch again, crying:

"The time is up, gentlemen; are you ready?"

The young lord sprang on his horse in an ungainly manner as he cried:

"I am ready, and hang me if I don't clear that gate or break my neck."

"Clear the way for Lord Craven," cried the Boy of Donnybrook.

And you may be perfectly satisfied that there was no obstacle in the way of the horse and rider until they would reach the iron gate with its sharp spikes pointing upward.

Every eye in the yard was turned on the black horse and its rider, as they drew up for a moment, and then fearful glances were cast at the high gate, with its treacherous spikes on top.

Lord Craven was very unpopular with all present, yet very few cared to see him or the gallant horse impaled on the gate, or hurled back with a broken neck.

Reeling in his saddle, but grasping the reins with a firm hand, the young lord started the noble black horse, while more than one voice muttered aloud:

"He will be killed sure."

From the windows of the hall Lady Craven, Rose Dashwood, and the female servants looked out at the thrilling scene, and more than one fair eye was closed as the brave horse rushed forward at a gallop, while the pretty waiting-maid who had received her first kiss from the young man on the previous night gasped forth:

"It is a mortal shame to let him try it."

Still swaying a little in his saddle, but with his hands and knees firmly pressed at the proper places, the gallant rider rushed at the fearful leap.

At it they went with a fiery rush, up in the air went horse and rider, and then clear over the highest spike they flew without touching a hair on brave Fairplay.

Wild and loud were the shouts that then rang out, caps and hats were tossed in the air, blackthorns were flourished with a vengeance, while the girls in the windows danced with joy as they cheered their young lord for the first time in their lives.

The judge advanced a step or two toward Captain Slasher when the excitement had subsided a little and said:

"It is your turn now, Captain Slasher."

Before the captain could make any reply the young lord

appeared on his black horse outside the gate, and raising his cap as if to command attention, he cried aloud:

"I'll wager you another thousand pounds we will clear it back again, Captain Slasher."

"No, no," cried the judge. "The contest must go on according to the rules. Captain Slasher will now clear the gate, and then he will lead you where he pleases."

Captain Slasher drew his horse back to the spot from whence the young lord had started, and he then started forward at a hard gallop.

The excitement grew intense when they reached the proper rising point, and then a yell of disgust burst from the Boy of Donnybrook's friends.

The bright bay had balked, refusing to take the leap at the signal from its rider.

The judge stepped forward at the moment, crying aloud:

"Lord Craven has won his wager in splendid style, and you are defeated, Captain Slasher."

The young lord rode up to the gate again, and lifting his cap, he cried:

"Clear the way inside there and we will jump back to claim the stakes."

Riding his horse back on the lawn, the daring fellow faced the iron gate again, and over they went in gallant style, while the shouts that rang out were re-echoed through the deep woods beyond.

Lord Craven then walked over to Captain Slasher, who had also dismounted, and reaching out his hand, cried:

"I'll thank you for that thousand pounds, Slasher."

The captain ground his teeth as he drew out the crisp bills and handed them over to the victor, saying:

"I'll double the stakes on the steeplechase with you."

"I'll take you at that," was the prompt response. "And I'll bet you a thousand more that you will not take Fairplay now and clear that gate."

The captain grew red in the face, and then stammered forth:

"I never rode the horse before, and I will not venture the leap."

The new Boy of Donnybrook witnessed the whole scene in silence, while his cowardly heart was palpitating with intense excitement.

As his half-brother turned to enter the stable, with the young men he had lately engaged, the miserable fellow turned away with a groan as he muttered to himself:

"Oh, what a cowardly dog I am! If I had only half his courage I would be the happiest man in Ireland to-day, and I would snap my finger at the fiends in the house."

CHAPTER V.

CONSTERNATION AT CRAVEN HALL.

It was worse than consternation among the heads of the house, according to the servants, and especially the female portion of them, who highly enjoyed the great change going on.

Before the day closed the young lord had asserted himself in such a manner as to astonish all the inmates from the kitchen to the upper stories.

Night had scarcely set in when another solemn conclave was held in the bedroom of the wounded man, and pale was the face of Lady Craven as she presided over the meeting.

Addressing her wounded cousin, the indignant lady commenced by saying:

"Have you heard about the goings on of the tipsy puppy, my dear John?"

Jack Burke groaned and cast an eye down at his bandaged leg, as he replied:

"Yes, I heard something about him. What the mischief has got into the fellow?"

"He has sold himself to the fiend, I think," answered Captain Slasher. "None but the Evil One could have rode as he did to-day."

"It is the drink that is doing it all," protested Dick Craven.

"It is not the drink altogether, and he has had dealings with a human fiend, who must be put out of the way at once."

"Who do you mean, cousin?" asked Jack Burke.

"I mean that scamp Dan T'lan, the Boy of Donnybrook, who has been about with him all the afternoon."

The wounded man started a little as he asked:

"You don't mean to say that that harum-scarum scoundrel has been around here all the afternoon?"

Great was the indignation on Lady's Craven's face as she replied:

"I tell you he has. That wretch of a stepson of mine invited all the scamps of the village into the kitchen after the jumping match, and he made the servant girls furnish them with food and drink until they were scarcely able to stand."

"Where does the Boy of Donnybrook live?" asked Captain Slasher.

"I will tell you," answered Dick Craven. "He spends most of his time when asleep in a hut at the end of the wood."

"Well, we must attend to him to-night," said Lady Craven.

Before another word could be uttered the door was flung open and the young lord staggered into the room, crying:

"Hello, Cousin Jack Burke, I came in to see how you are getting along after that slight scratch you got. You must hurry up, man, and get well, till I have another crack at you, as none of the cowardly dogs around here have pluck enough to stand up before me since I winged the Galway crack shot."

Lady Craven and her friends who could use their limbs sprang to their feet in the utmost consternation at the appearance of the young lord, but the lady was too confounded to utter a word.

Lady Craven was recovering her presence of mind, when she happened to cast a glance at the door, and two objects standing there caused her to utter an indignant cry, and she then exclaimed:

"You audacious wretch, how dare you bring that scoundrel and his dog in here?"

The young lord turned to greet the new Boy of Donnybrook and his dog, who were standing at the door, as he cried:

"Don't be afraid, Dan, as I will stand to you. Why shouldn't I bring my own brother where I please? You kept me away from him too long, but I won't stand it any more, and he will come here as often as ever I please."

Lady Craven fairly foamed with rage, and she then turned to Captain Slasher and her son, crying:

"Will you have those brutes put out of here?"

The young lord put himself in a boxing attitude on the instant, and faced his two foes as he cried:

"Come on, and I'll whale the pair of you if you try to touch Dan. Back me, old fellow, and we'll thrash the pair of them within an inch of their lives."

Seeing that his foes were not approaching to the attack, the young lord cried:

"Why don't you come at it? Why don't you ring for your servants, and see if they are able to put my friend and his dog out? I have stout servants at my back now, and hang me if I don't bundle every one of you out of the house, if you attempt to cut any more capers with me."

"The wretch is beastly drunk," cried Lady Craven.

"Drunk or sober, I will be master in my own house, as I have found out that you are only my guardian in name."

Lady Craven winced, as she knew that she had been playing without much authority, as she had really very little control over the young lord save what she had assumed for her own purposes.

She was a brave woman, however, and she at once exclaimed:

"If you do not behave yourself I will have you put in the mad-house."

"I don't care that for all the mad-houses in Ireland. Just try to send the keepers after me, and I'll get the brave boys at my back to flay them alive and duck them in the pond after."

Then turning away from his step-mother, the young lord addressed Captain Slasher, crying:

"I want you to leave my house on the instant, Slasher. I know you to be a cheat and a rogue and I don't want such fellows as you here at all. Will you go?"

The young lord paused a moment or two for a reply, and then clapped his hands, crying:

"In here, boys, and out with that sharper. Kick him out on the lawn where his horse and his men are awaiting him, and I will stand to your back."

Five or six fellows sprang into the room on the instant, armed with blackthorns, and they darted at Captain Slasher, seized him without any ceremony, and dragged him out of the room, while Lady Craven screamed with terror.

Dick Craven did attempt to protect his friend, but the young lord dealt him a crack on the nose that sent him reeling into a corner.

Still screaming with terror, Lady Craven darted out of the room, crying:

"The boy is mad."

"I'll show you how mad I am before long," cried the young lord, as he turned to the bedside of the wounded man, as he continued:

"See here, Jack Burke, you are not a bad fellow at heart, but the others got you to set on me, and I had to wing you. Be friends with me, and I will always treat you like a man and a cousin. What say you, old fellow?"

The young lord reached out his hand to the wounded man, who grasped it warmly as he responded:

"May I never mount a horse again, my lord, if you don't beat all I ever saw. Hang me, but the shot you gave me has opened my eyes, and I see that you are right. Yes, I'll be friends with you, and I'll stand to you through thick and thin."

Pressing the hand of his cousin again, Lord Craven hastened out of the room, followed by the Boy of Donnybrook and his dog.

Cries arose on the lawn below, and when the young man hastened out through the front door he found the friends of the Boy of Donnybrook engaged in a hot struggle with Captain Slasher and his grooms and stablemen, all of whom had been making themselves at home at Craven Hall for some weeks past.

In less than five minutes Captain Slasher and his friends were driven off the grounds and along the road, the victors allowing them to bear their horses along with them.

Raun was not an idle spectator of the scene, as more than one leg had felt his fangs, and it required several calls on the part of his old master to keep the savage dog from making some subjects for a coroner's inquest.

On returning in triumph to the hall the young lord was met by Rose Dashwood, who approached him in a timid manner, saying:

"Dear cousin, what is the meaning of all this violence?"

The young man cast an indifferent glance on the fair girl, as he retorted:

"Dear cousin, indeed! It was only yesterday that you called me an impertinent puppy, and so on, when I attempted to say a few civil things to you."

Rose cast an inquiring glance up at the flushed face, as she replied:

"I am sure, my lord, I will not so offend you again. In the morning I will leave your house, and you will never be troubled with my presence here again."

"Just as you please about that, Miss Dashwood."

When he reached his own room Lord Craven flung himself on a chair and held his sides while he burst out laughing, as he exclaimed:

"Oh, holy smoke, if this keeps on much longer I will fairly die with happiness! I may not be courting the girl right, but hang me if I don't think it better than to be fawning on her as Harry was doing."

Having got his house in order, as it were, for the night, the new lord was about to retire to his bed at eleven o'clock, when a familiar bark out on the lawn attracted his attention.

Without hesitating a moment he seized his pistols and a heavy stick, and hastened out into the stables, where he was soon followed by Raun.

One glance at the dog showed him that the poor fellow had received rough usage at the hands of some rascals, but a hasty examination told him that the animal was not seriously injured.

Arousing some of the men he had engaged in the afternoon, and feeling that his brother was in trouble, the young lord hastened away with them toward the hut in the wood, the dog leading the way.

When they reached the hut they found it empty, and there was every indication that a struggle had taken place there recently.

The new lord then addressed his followers, saying:

"My brave boys, I think that the Boy of Donnybrook has met with some foul play. Are you men enough to come with me on the track of the rascals who came here to-night to waylay him, and the good dog here will lead us?"

"To be sure," was the ready response from his old friends. "We are all ready and willing to die for the brave Boy of Donnybrook."

With the dog leading the way, they were soon out in the wood again, while the new lord said to himself:

"If they have not killed or hurt him badly, there won't be much harm done, providing that he has sense enough to hold his tongue and not betray us."

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW BOY OF DONNYBROOK IN TROUBLE.

Lady Craven was not the woman to rest easy while her domestic throne was being assailed.

Before the new lord had returned to the hall after his battle with Captain Slasher's forces she held an important consultation with her son, and that young man soon rode away to meet the gallant captain.

The defeated sportsman and his followers had stopped at the leading tavern in the village of Donnybrook, and when Dick Craven arrived there he found Captain Slasher engaged in plastering the cuts he had received at the hands of the young lord, and most of his men were similarly engaged.

While thus smarting under his wounds, Dick Craven found Captain Slasher ready for the plot which his mother had suggested against the Boy of Donnybrook.

The new Boy of Donnybrook was weary enough after the exertions of the day, and he was sound asleep in the little hut when the loud barking of the big dog aroused him.

Before he could well understand the situation or realize his danger, however, the door of the hut was burst in by five men wearing black-crape over their faces who assailed the dog and himself with large clubs in the most vigorous manner.

The cowardly Boy of Donnybrook yelled with terror as he was dragged from the hut, while the brave dog fought in his defense until he was stretched apparently lifeless on the ground.

The masked men then placed a gag on the lad's mouth and dragged him away through the woods while they heaped blows and cuffs on him without mercy.

On reaching the roadside, the prisoner was placed in a cab, two of his captors entering with him, and the vehicle started up the mountain road, two horsemen riding behind it.

When they had reached a certain point on the mountain the prisoner was dragged from the cab again, and then led into a hunting lodge, which belonged to the estate of the young lord.

The Boy of Donnybrook was then surrounded by the masked men, and Dick Craven addressed him in fierce tones, disguising his voice, as he cried:

"Dan Dolan, you infernal rascal, we have brought you up here to put you to death. How dare you appear at Craven Hall to lead the young lord astray?"

"I didn't lead the young lord astray, gentlemen. Sure it was he invited me to join him against those who are trying to rob him out of house and home."

"None of your lying to us," continued Dick Craven. "Didn't you bring all the scamps in the village to the hall to-day to raise a riot?"

"He asked me to bring him a lot of the boys to show him fair play, and how could I refuse him?"

"We will take good care of you now," cried Dick Craven, "as we are going to put you out of harm's way, confound you. Get the rope, and we will give him five minutes to say his prayers before we strangle him up."

One of the men produced a rope with a loop at one end of it, and it was flung over the neck of the unfortunate lad, while he fell on his knees, crying:

"For mercy sake, gentlemen, spare my life, as I am not fit to die at all. Let me go, and I will clear away never to show my face in the neighborhood again."

"We will teach you to meddle with his affairs," replied Dick Craven.

At a signal from young Craven the wretched Boy of Donnybrook was dragged out of the lodge with the rope around his neck, and then hustled toward the stable.

The poor fellow was trembling in every limb, when his tormentors flung one end of the rope over the hoisting beam jutting out over the stable door, and Dick Craven cried:

"Up with the rascal!"

The poor fellow was already raised from the ground, when a female form dashed out of the lodge, and an indignant voice rang out, crying:

"This farce has gone far enough! Dick Craven, you should be ashamed of yourself!"

The young man turned, and uttered an exclamation of surprise when he recognized his cousin, Rose Dashwood, who was arrayed in a riding-habit, and whose bright eyes were flashing with scornful indignation.

The men holding the end of the rope dropped it on the instant, and the poor lad fell gasping on the ground.

Pushing his tormentors aside, Rose Dashwood sprang to the side of the poor fellow as she exclaimed:

"You have murdered him as it is, you wretches, and I will denounce you!"

One of the men sprang for a bowl of water, and the young girl dashed it into the face of the insensible Boy of Donnybrook, while she continued:

"I knew what you were about to-night, and I rode up here ahead of you to prevent murder, but I am afraid I am too late."

"The rascal is only shamming," cried Dick Craven.

The lad opened his eyes at the moment, and glared up at the young girl as he muttered aloud:

"Is it in heaven or the other place I am at all?"

Cries of joy burst from Dick Craven and his friends, all of whom were still wearing the black masks over their faces, as they witnessed the revival of their intended victim.

The Boy of Donnybrook had scarcely recovered his senses when he recognized Rose Dashwood and took in the situation in a few moments.

Springing to his feet, and flinging the rope from around his neck, he made a dash at Dick Craven, as he cried:

"So you would murder me, would you? If there is any law in the land you will all suffer for this."

Dick Craven knew that the Boy of Donnybrook was one of the bravest lads in the neighborhood, as well as a furious boxer, and he retreated in great haste, crying:

"Let us get away, friends."

Captain Slasher and his friends sprang on their horses at the same time, and the whole party hastened away from the lodge, leaving Rose Dashwood and the Boy of Donnybrook alone together.

The conspirators did not take the direct road back to the valley, but hastened away over the mountain so as to reach Donnybrook by another route.

The young girl cast several inquisitive glances at the Boy of Donnybrook, who was still trembling with excitement, ere she addressed him, saying:

"I believe you are connected with Lord Craven in some way."

The cowardly fellow was sick of the part he was playing, and he was about to declare himself to his cousin, when the loud barking of a dog was heard on the mountain road below, and the young girl cried:

"Here are some others coming up."

Then a loud voice below rang out, crying:

"Have your guns ready, boys, and we will pepper the rascals in fine style."

"It is Lord Craven," cried Rose Dashwood.

The big dog soon dashed into the yard, followed by the young lord and his friends, while the new Boy of Donnybrook cried:

"If you came here to save me you would have been late only for this young lady."

The disguised lord stared at the young lady in surprise, and then he said to her:

"I am surprised to see you up here, Rose. Is it possible that you take part in such work?"

The young lady did not reply to the young lord, but turned toward the stable in an indignant manner.

The new lord then drew the Boy of Donnybrook aside and eagerly inquired:

"Did you betray yourself? What has happened to you at all? Where are the others?"

The cowardly fellow's courage revived in the presence of his brave brother and his followers, and he hastened to give an account of his adventures, dwelling in particular on his rescue by Rose Dashwood.

Just as the narrative was concluded Rose Dashwood led her horse out of the stable, and the young lord sprang to her side in a gallant manner as he cried, falling on his knees at the same time:

"On my bended knees, good cousin, do I crave your pardon most humbly. I was a fool and a madman to even dream that you would countenance such cruel work."

The young girl relented a little as she remembered that the mistake on her cousin's part was quite natural.

On the way down the mountain road the young lord and his cousin became quite confidential.

The young girl cast a glance back at the Boy of Donnybrook, who was walking after them with his friends, and she asked:

"Is it really true that it was the Boy of Donnybrook who inspired you with courage to fight a duel, to beat your step-brother, to leap over iron gates and to play the desperado in general?"

"It is true enough, cousin. I suppose I must have had the stuff in me, but my courage was asleep, as it were, until he aroused me to action. Strange as it may appear, I was the biggest coward in the world before, but now, even when he is not near me and without any help from liquor, I feel as brave as a lion."

Before they reached Craven Hall Rose Dashwood became an ally of her young cousin, and she agreed to uphold him against his enemies, providing he kept in proper bounds.

As the new Boy of Donnybrook had received several sore bruises at the hands of his assailants in the hut, the young lord offered him a bed in his own private apartments that night.

Before retiring to bed, and after ruminating over the incidents of the past few days, the new lord made up his mind as to his course of action for the future, as he felt that he would have to be very careful, not only in his actions, but in controlling his cowardly brother in order to prevent an exposure.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YOUNG LORD IN TROUBLE.

According to the will of her late husband Lady Craven and her young son were entitled to a home at Craven Hall, and a certain annual sum from the estate until the marriage of the young lord.

The cunning woman had also certain control over the estate and the actions of the young lord until he became of age, but she could not touch the revenues in the hands of the trustees except with the consent of her step-son.

If young Lord Craven should die her son would then become lord and master of the estates as next of kin, and that was the crowning ambition of the proud woman.

While the young lord acted the part of a coward, and while he appeared to be a mere straw in her hands, Lady Craven hoped to get rid of him without resorting to open warfare or deadly intrigue.

On the following morning the designing woman held a private interview with Rose Dashwood, when Rose declared that she would denounce and condemn any further assaults on the young lord and his friend the Boy of Donnybrook, declaring at the same time that she would keep silent regarding the outrageous assault on the previous night.

In a word Rose Dashwood declared that she would uphold young Lord Craven in all his just rights and privileges, and that she was pleased to see that he had acquired courage enough to make a proper stand in his own house.

Dick Craven returned to the hall in the morning, and on consulting with his mother it was agreed that they would remain quiet for the time and watch the actions of the young lord.

Early on the same morning the young lord was out in the stables in company with the Boy of Donnybrook, and he then gave out that his half-brother was to reside with him thereafter in the hall, and that he would have full charge of the hunters and racers in the stable.

On and after that day the Boy of Donnybrook became the constant companion of the young master of Craven Hall.

Weeks and months went by, and young Lord Craven continued to be master of his own house. He was growing more popular with his neighbors and tenants each day, while his character for true courage and manliness became fully established.

The Boy of Donnybrook was never seen abroad save in the company of the young lord, whom he often induced to visit the old haunts in the village with him.

In the meantime, Lady Craven and her son left the hall to pay their usual visit to a summer watering place in England, and they took Rose Dashwood with them.

While the first dark days of the agreement were passing, the cowardly Boy of Donnybrook felt greatly relieved at the thought of his brave brother assuming all the dangers to be encountered in the prize ring, on the race-course, and at the hands of Dick Craven and his wily mother.

As the time passed along, however, and the mean rascal perceived that the new lord had fought and shaped his course into apparently smooth water, he began to kick in the traces and longed to play lord of the hall again.

As the cowardly young hound was in love with Rose Dashwood in his own selfish way, it galled him to see his gallant brother on excellent terms with the lovely girl who had treated himself with so much scorn.

When he retired to the sleeping rooms with his gallant

brother one night he flung himself on a chair in a sulky manner, as he grumbled forth:

"I can't stand this any longer, Dan Dolan. You are making dead love to Rose to-night, and I can see that she is getting fond of you also."

"Hang your eyes, am I not making love to her for you? Do you think, if you take your own place to-morrow, that you could make headway with her?"

"I am sure I could."

A dark frown appeared on the face of the brave young man as he scowled at his brother, saying:

"You are the meanest hound unhung to-day. Do you forget your solemn compact with me?"

"It was a foolish compact, and it will not hold good in law."

The scowl on the face of the old Boy of Donnybrook grew darker and darker, and he drew a small document from his vest pocket and handed it to the other, as he fairly hissed forth:

"Maybe this will hold good in law."

The new Boy of Donnybrook only glanced at the paper, when his face wore an alarmed expression, and he gasped forth:

"Where did you find that?"

"In our father's old desk."

As the acting lord spoke he snatched the important document from his treacherous brother's hand.

"You can't come that dodge on me, Dan Dolan, as I am certain that is a forgery."

"It is not a forgery, you lying dog! This paper proves that my father married my poor mother before he ever met your mother or the present Lady Craven. My mother was the real Lady Craven; I am the lord and heir to this estate, and you are not entitled to any claim, as your father committed bigamy when he married your mother, as his first wife was then alive. You are the real Boy of Donnybrook, without courage or honor, and I am the true lord and master of Craven Hall."

The cowardly fellow was thoroughly scared at the announcement thus made to him, and he fell on his knees in the most abject manner as he pleaded forth:

"Oh, Dan, Dan, you will not take advantage of that document and rob me of my name and fortune!"

A scornful smile passed over the face of the old Boy of Donnybrook as he retorted:

"Go to bed now, and beware how you act hereafter. Not another word on the subject until I speak to you, and heaven help you if you offer to betray me in any manner or form, for I know that you are capable of it, and I will keep my eye on you."

The miserable boy for the time being did sneak off to bed, but he did not sleep a wink that night, as he lay awake thinking of his new position, and plotting in his mind against the brave fellow who had fought his battles.

Before the day dawned the cowardly wretch had made up his mind to get rid of his brave brother by joining in a plot against him with Lady Craven and her son, and without exposing the secret compact.

On the following morning, while the acting lord was away at a hunt, the new Boy of Donnybrook threw himself in the way of Dick Craven and commenced the negotiation.

Dick Craven soon consulted with his mother, and the keen-witted woman held an interview with the rascally Boy of Donnybrook, which ended in forming a deadly plot against the young Lord Craven.

Soon after the last consultation was ended Dick Craven rode away to Dublin to consult with Captain Slasher and Jack Burke.

The Galway Blazer had recovered from his wound, but when he found that he was lame for life he became fearfully embittered against the young lord of Craven Hall, and he mentally vowed that he would never rest until he had another shot at the lucky duelist, or avail himself of some other means of taking revenge.

At the time of which we write three highwaymen infested the roads around Dublin, and several of the country gentlemen had been assaulted and robbed while returning to their homes at night.

On the night after Dick Craven paid his visit to Dublin the Boy of Donnybrook rode up to Craven Hall in a state of great excitement, crying:

"Murder! murder! The villains of robbers set on us down by the woods, and they have killed Lord Craven."

Rose Dashwood was standing at the window at the time,

and the young girl's face grew deadly pale, while she almost fainted on hearing the announcement.

Recovering her presence of mind, however, the good girl hastened down with Lady Craven, and they found the Boy of Donnybrook surrounded by the stablemen and servants, as he was giving a thrilling account of the attack made on himself and the young lord by three masked robbers on the lonely road leading from the village of Donnybrook.

Calling on the stablemen to bring forth horses and a carriage, Rose cried: "He may not be dead, and we must hasten down to him."

As no one doubted the truth or courage of the Boy of Donnybrook, his story was believed by all except Rose Dashwood, who disliked and suspected the fellow ever since he had appeared at the hall.

The impatient young girl was the first to spring on a horse and dash down the avenue, but she had only reached the large gate when she met two gentlemen bearing the senseless form of the young lord toward the hall.

A cry of agony burst from the young girl as she clasped the hand of the luckless youth, but that hopeless expression soon gave way to one of joy as she felt a slight pressure in return, which denoted that the young lord had life in him still.

CHAPTER VIII.

RAUN SHOWS HIS TEETH.

It was soon reported that the lord of Craven Hall was lying insensible in his bedroom, and that he was certain to die from the wound received at the hands of the highway robbers.

Lady Craven and her son pretended to be dreadfully shocked over the incident, but very few believed that their grief was real.

Dan Dolan, the Boy of Donnybrook, was in a fearful state of anguish when he learned from the doctors that his noble half brother was certain to die of his wound without recovering his senses.

Rose Dashwood was the only member of the family who honestly deplored the coming death of her cousin.

After the surgeons retired from the bedside of the wounded man Rose Dashwood took her place by his side, and continued to watch and wait on him during the livelong night.

The Boy of Donnybrook also watched by the side of his patron for some hours, the big dog also remained in the room.

Toward morning the selfish Boy of Donnybrook declared that he was dying for want of sleep, and he retired to the next room, calling the dog with him.

Raun would not stir from the bedside of his old master, however.

On the following day Rose Dashwood sent a private message to one of the most eminent surgeons in Dublin, requesting him to hasten to Craven Hall.

The surgeon was a young man who was well acquainted with the young lady and her father, and he was only too glad to obey the summons.

Rose led the young surgeon to the bedside of the wounded man, saying:

"Good doctor, the others say that it is impossible for him to recover, yet I feel in my heart that he will not die if he is properly cared for."

"While there is life there is hope, Miss Dashwood. If you will retire I will give you my opinion in half an hour."

The young girl did retire from the sick chamber, and the young surgeon joined her again at the appointed time, saying in cheerful tones:

"There is hope, Miss Dashwood, but the young gentleman will require the utmost care and attention."

After a very serious conversation with the young surgeon Rose decided that either the Boy of Donnybrook or herself should always remain in the room with the invalid, while the young doctor declared that he would visit his patient at least twice a day.

When Lady Craven was informed that there was some hope for the recovery of the young lord she appeared to be delighted.

Being very weary after the long night of watching, as well as the day of anxiety, Rose Dashwood did retire to rest on the second night, and Lady Craven and the Boy of Donnybrook kept watch over the invalid.

The big dog had disappeared during the day, and his new master could not find him.

The treacherous Boy of Donnybrook had held another conversation with Lady Craven and her son, when it was decided, among other things, that Raun should be put out of the way by poison.

About ten o'clock that night Lady Craven and the Boy of Donnybrook were watching over the insensible young man, when her son and Captain Slasher stole into the room.

The four conspirators then withdrew into a corner, when Captain Slasher asked, in whispered tones:

"Is the young beast alive yet?"

Lady Craven frowned in a fearful manner, and glared at the bed as she replied:

"Yes, he is alive yet, and that meddlesome puppy from Dublin declares that he will live if he receives proper care and attention."

"He must die this night!" hissed Dick Craven.

"To be sure he must," said the cowardly Boy of Donnybrook. "I am almost sure he noticed my trick before the shot was fired."

Captain Slasher then turned on the treacherous Boy of Donnybrook and pointed to the bed as he whispered forth:

"You must finish him, then, you rascal. You got the spoils without much trouble, and you must now finish the job for us."

The cowardly Boy of Donnybrook saw that he was caught in a nice trap, and he groaned in agony as he gasped forth: "What can I do?"

Lady Craven pointed to the insensible man as she replied, in cautious tones:

"You have only to remove the bandage from the wound for a few minutes, and then put it on again. The surgeon from Dublin said that he would recover his senses in the morning, and if he does he will denounce you."

The wretched lad cast another glance at the insensible young man on the bed, and he then braced himself, saying: "I'll do it."

The wretch then moved slowly toward the bed, leaving the others standing near the door, while he said to himself:

"I don't want to do this, but won't I fix them hereafter for making me do it."

The unnatural scoundrel was then in the act of seizing the bandage on the insensible young man's head, when a fearful growl arrested his attention, and the next moment Raun sprang out from under the bed and seized his arm with his large fangs.

Dick Craven and Captain Slasher made a forward movement as if about to aid their fellow-conspirator, when Lady Craven seized each of them by the arm and drew them back, as she hissed into their ears:

"Out with you at once or we will be betrayed, as the house will be alarmed by the cries."

The powerful animal then forced the murderous wretch to the floor, while Lady Craven opened the door and called aloud for assistance.

At that moment Rose Dashwood rushed into the room, and when she saw the dog struggling with the Boy of Donnybrook she instantly cried:

"Raun, Raun, good dog, come off and don't be so wicked."

The faithful dog recognized her voice on the instant, and he released his grasp on the rascal's arm.

Giving vent to a joyous bark, the animal wagged his tail at the young lady and then turned to lick the hand of his old master.

Rose Dashwood glared down at the prostrate scoundrel and then at the dog, as she demanded:

"What were you doing that the dog made at you?"

"I was not doing anything, miss," replied the lying rascal. "I was sitting there on the chair with Lady Craven when the mad beast sprang out at me from under the bed, and caught me by the arm. He is gone mad, and he ought to be shot at once."

And the miserable wretch groaned in agony as he glared at his bleeding arm.

Lady Craven advanced to the door at the moment as she cried aloud:

"The brute is mad, as he flew at the young man without any cause. Stand aside, Rose, so that the servants may shoot the brute."

The wounded man raised his head from the pillow at the moment and glared around the room, as he cried:

"Who talks of shooting the dog?"

They were all startled at the movement of the wounded man, and Rose sprang to his side as she cried, in joyous tones:

"Dear cousin, you must not excite yourself. I will promise you that no one will touch the dog."

"Raun is not mad, and no one will dare touch him while I live. I want all of you to leave here at once except my brother Dan and my cousin Rose."

As the young lord uttered the last words he cast a furious glance on Lady Craven and her son, who were still standing at the door with a group of male servants behind him.

Lady Craven and her son retired with scowling faces, and the Boy of Donnybrook arose to his feet, as if about to follow them, as he groaned forth:

"I must go and have my arm dressed, or I will be sure to go mad."

"Remain here!" commanded Lord Craven. "Rose, lock that door, and take one of the pistols you will find in the bureau."

The young girl sprang to the door and turned the key.

When Rose had secured the pistol she advanced to the bedside again, saying:

"What am I to do with this, cousin?"

"You are to watch over me with it, dear Rose, while I deal with this fellow. When I tell you it is a matter of life and death for me, do not attempt to stop me. I know what I'm about, and I have had my senses longer than you think."

The cowardly Boy of Donnybrook could not meet the gaze of his brother, but he managed to gasp forth:

"My arm—my arm! I can't imagine why Raun turned on me as he did."

"I can imagine it," answered the wounded youth. "Raun is a faithful dog, and he could not keep quiet when he saw that you meant to take my life. Rose, that wretch wants to murder me. Point the pistol at his head, and shoot him if he stirs until I am through with him."

CHAPTER IX.

ROSE HEARS SOME SECRETS.

When the young girl heard the fearful denunciation she turned her flashing eyes on the trembling Boy of Donnybrook and pointed the pistol at his head as she said:

"You miserable wretch, I knew that the dog would not spring at you unless you were at some mischief."

The Boy of Donnybrook fell on his knees before the noble girl and held up his hands in an imploring manner as he gasped forth:

"It was all a mistake, Miss Rose. On my sacred honor, I didn't mean any wrong at all."

"You are a miserable liar," said the wounded youth, in his clear, calm tones. "Stand up like a man and listen to what I have to say to you."

The wretch did stand up, while Rose kept the pistol pointed at his head as the wounded man continued:

"Where is that paper you took from my pocket after I was shot on the roadside?"

"I have it here all safe. I kept it for you, fearing that it might fall into wrong hands."

"Yes, I know you kept it safe for me. Just hand it out now and give it to the young lady, or I will order her to shoot you like a dog, as you are."

The miserable Boy of Donnybrook drew the paper from his pocket and handed it to Rose, as he said:

"I am glad it is out of my hands."

"Read it, Rose," said the wounded man.

The young girl opened the paper and read it carefully ere she glanced at young Lord Craven, as she asked, in agitated tones:

"What does this mean, cousin?"

A peculiar smile played over the face of the wounded youth as he replied:

"It means, dear Rose, that I am an impostor, and that there stands the real lord of Craven Hall. It means that Dan Dolan, the Boy of Donnybrook, is lord and master here by right of birth, as his mother was my father's first and lawful wife, and I am by right the real Boy of Donnybrook."

The young girl was astounded at the announcement thus made, and the trembling wretch before her was equally dumfounded, as he could not comprehend his brother's object for the moment.

Rose kept staring from one to the other for some mo-

ments, until she at length exclaimed, glancing at the certificate of the marriage:

"Is it possible that this miserable wretch is the real lord of Craven Hall?"

"Yes, Rose, that is the real lord of Craven Hall, and I am only an impostor. Just listen patiently while I tell you a short story."

The honest fellow went on to tell of his own early life, giving a brief sketch of his career as the real Boy of Donnybrook until the night when he rescued his cowardly brother from the river.

He then told of the compact made between them, and of his having agreed to change places with the coward and fight his battles with his enemies for one year.

When the wounded youth reached the point where he found his own mother's certificate of marriage in his father's old desk, the young girl clasped her hands joyously, as she exclaimed:

"Why, dear cousin, this is the certificate of your mother's marriage, and you are the real lord of Craven Hall after all."

"No, no, Rose. A compact is a compact with me. That cowardly dog saw fit to get tired of his part before the time was up, and he turned on me in a treacherous manner."

The cunning rascal thus accused had recovered a little of his wits, and he growled forth:

"I didn't turn on you, Dan, until you threatened to take my place for good and all."

"I never threatened any such thing, you miserable dog, until you wanted to break the compact. What did you propose to do with that paper when you stole it from me last night, thinking that I was dead?"

"I was certain the highwaymen shot you, and I wanted the paper to prove that I, as the Boy of Donnybrook, was the real lord of Craven Hall, so that I could get the best of Dick Craven and his mother."

"Get the best of Dick Craven and his mother!" sneered the wounded youth. "Why, you cowardly dog, they would have only child's play in getting rid of you in short order. If I had not taken your place when I did you would be lying cold in your grave now."

The young girl cast another scornful glance at the miserable coward before her, and she placed the important paper in her pocket as she said in decided tones:

"I am not bound by any oath or promise, and I will see that justice is done. I will declare the truth this very night."

The wounded man grasped the young girl's hand and drew her toward him as he replied:

"You will not do anything of the kind, Rose. I have told you my secret in confidence, and I beg of you not to disclose it until I give you permission."

"But this wretch here may murder you in the meantime," protested the young girl.

"He will not attempt that again. If he does I will give you full liberty to denounce him. You will retain that paper in your safe keeping until the year has expired. If that fellow becomes a man by that time, he will take his place here again, and I will return to my old life. If he makes the slightest attempt on me again in the meantime, I give you liberty to denounce him."

The young girl asked:

"What was he doing when the dog sprang at him?"

"He was doing something that he never will attempt again. How long has Captain Slasher been in this house?"

"I was not aware that he was here at all."

"He is here, but it does not matter," said the wounded youth. Then he said to the Boy of Donnybrook: "You can go now and have your bite dressed, but send two of the men from the stable up here to me at once."

The Boy of Donnybrook turned from the bed and left the room without uttering a word, while the acting lord addressed Rose in more earnest tones, saying:

"You will promise me to keep silent, Rose, as it is very important to me, indeed."

"I will promise if you so request it, but I fear that my silence may lead to evil hereafter."

"I must risk that, as I have laid out a course that I must follow."

When the two men he had summoned entered the room the young man and Rose had decided on their future course of action.

After partaking of some nourishment, the wounded man fell into a sound sleep, and he was watched over by the faithful dog and the trusted men whom he had summoned.

Within a week after Lord Craven was up and around again, to the joy of his followers in the stable, and to the great disappointment and consternation of Lady Craven and her friends.

One day Lord Craven made a public announcement that he was going out in quest of the highway robbers, and that he would not return to Craven Hall until he had punished the wretches who had made the cowardly assault on him.

On that same night Dick Craven and his mother started for Dublin, and they were soon in consultation with Captain Slasher and Jack Burke.

In the meantime, the authorities in Dublin were on the alert, and a large reward was offered for the capture of the highwaymen who had infested the neighborhood.

Young Lord Craven did not ride further than the village of Donnybrook that night, as he stopped at the leading tavern to join in a carouse with some of the leading young sports of the neighborhood.

It was after eleven when he left the tavern, and he staggered in a stupid manner as he mounted his horse to ride home alone.

The young man was still swaying to and fro when he reached the dark wood where the highwaymen had assailed him, yet keen was his eye and steady was the hand on the pistol while he peered around, muttering:

"I am certain the rascals will be at me again to-night, and won't I give them a warm reception!"

The muttered words were scarcely uttered when three men on horseback dashed out of the wood, crying:

"Stand and deliver! Your money or your life!"

CHAPTER X.

IN THE DARK WOOD OF DONNYBROOK.

The three riders had scarcely dashed out of the wood when young Lord Craven fell forward on his horse's neck, as if overcome by the liquor he had taken.

The horse shied at the same moment, but the rider clung to his back, while the three rascals who were wearing dark masks discharged their pistols at the apparently helpless man, one of them crying:

"That will fix him!"

While the smoke from the pistol was still enshrouding the robbers young Lord Craven sat erect in his saddle, with a pistol in each hand, and fierce was his voice as it rang out, crying:

"I'll have at you now, you scoundrels!"

Then out rang his pistol-shots, and one of the robbers fell from his horse with a cry of agony, while another swayed to and fro as he cried out: "I am hit in the shoulder!"

The third robber turned his horse as he saw their intended victim aiming another weapon at him, and he bent down in his saddle as he galloped off, crying:

"Out for it!"

The wounded man then turned his horse on the instant, and he rode away after the other as another bullet whistled by his ear.

The young lord spurred on for a short distance in pursuit, as he yelled:

"Stand and fight me, you cowardly dogs!"

After riding a little way the brave young fellow pulled up as he said to himself:

"One will suit me to-night, and I can bag the others hereafter."

Galloping back to where the fallen man was lying on the road, he sprang from his horse and advanced toward him, pistol in hand, as he cried:

"We will have a look at you, my friend."

The man was lying on the flat of his back, and apparently insensible, when the young man stooped down and tore the mask from his face, striking a light with the match at the same time.

When the match was burning he held it before the face of the prostrate robber for a moment or so ere he exclaimed, in merry tones:

"Captain Slasher, by all that is wicked! Well, well, who would think that the great jockey had taken to the road!"

The sound of carriage wheels could be heard at the moment, and the young lord raised his voice, crying:

"Hello there, help!"

The carriage was soon on the spot, and the driver pulled up, crying:

"What's wrong there, my lord?"

"Is that you, Murphy?" answered the young lord, as he recognized the driver of the coach, who was one of his own men.

"It is me, my lord. Who is that lying on the ground there, sir?"

"Only a highway robber. Who have you got in the carriage, Murphy?"

"Lady Craven, my lord."

The young lord at once sprang to the door of the carriage and opened it, as he cried:

"Please step out, Lady Craven, as there is a friend of yours out here in great trouble."

Nerving herself with an effort, and shuddering the while, she sprang out of the carriage, crying:

"What has happened, Lord Craven?"

"Oh, nothing much, my lady. Three rascals in masks set on me as I rode through the wood just now, and I shot a couple of them. The other fellow got off free, but I'll catch him before he is many days older."

The trembling woman advanced to the side of the prostrate man, while the young lord cried to the driver:

"Fetch your lantern down here, Murphy, till we see if we can recognize the rascal."

The wounded robber was groaning in agony as the driver descended from the carriage with a lantern, while Lady Craven trembled from head to foot as she prepared to gaze on the upturned face.

When the light did fall on the features of her admirer, she pressed her hands to her breast and staggered back, as she gasped forth:

"Good heavens, it is Captain Slasher! It is impossible that he could be a highwayman."

The gay young lord then turned on the prostrate young man and gave him another touch of the sharp spur on the leg, as he cried:

"Where are you hit, Slasher?"

"In the right breast," groaned the fellow. "Oh, Lady Craven, it was all a mistake. For mercy's sake bear me to the hall and send for a surgeon."

The wounded man groaned fearfully as they placed him in the carriage, while Lady Craven whispered into his ear:

"Have courage and keep silent, and all will be well."

The wounded man pressed her hand as if to signify his assent, and they were soon moving on toward the hall.

As the carriage rolled quietly on to the house, Lady Craven whispered to her admirer, saying:

"Are you badly wounded?"

"Not as badly as I pretend, I think, but is not this an infernal scrape?"

"Keep courage, and it will not be as bad as it seems. What of the others?"

"Burke got a shot in the shoulder, I believe, but the cowardly cads rode away and left me in the lurch."

"Is Dick injured at all?"

"I think not, as the young coward dashed away at the first fire of the enemy."

Lady Craven frowned on her admirer, and pressed his arm as she retorted:

"Dick is not a coward, but that young scoundrel has the fortune of a fiend. Did you all fire at him as quickly as you could?"

"Yes, we all blazed away at the moment we dashed out of the wood. I watched him as he rode away from the tavern in the village, and the cunning fox pretended to be as drunk as an owl. How am I to escape out of his clutches?"

"Leave that to me, dear captain," cried Lady Craven, as she caressed the wounded man. "Are you certain that your wound is not serious?"

Captain Slasher felt his right side for a moment or so ere he replied:

"The ball struck me on the rib and knocked me from the horse, but I don't think there is much damage done. I was watching my chance to escape from the young rascal when you came along."

"You must not attempt to escape now, dear captain. You must brazen it out, and swear it was only intended for a practical joke, in order to put his courage to the test."

The gallant captain shrugged his shoulders as he replied with a groan:

"Nonsense, Lady Craven. That game would not work a moment. I must escape from his clutches, and get out of the country."

Lady Craven pressed her hands to her brow and pondered some moments ere she remarked:

"Yes, that will be best. Of course you will keep silent as to your companions?"

The gallant captain caught the lady by the arm and pressed it as he replied:

"That will depend on the reward I get."

"What reward do you seek, Captain Slasher?"

"Your hand in marriage, as you promised. I will fly to England, and you will join me there in a week or so, when we will become man and wife."

Before the gallant captain could say any more, young Lord Craven put his head in at the carriage window, crying:

"Here we are at the hall. Captain Slasher, I have a proposition to make to you before I publicly denounce you."

"Let us hear what it is?" asked the captain.

"Tell me who were your companions to-night, and I pledge you my honor to set you free."

"I will not," was the blunt reply.

"Then I will be compelled to denounce you at once, and have you placed under arrest."

Then calling on his faithful stablemen, the young lord pointed to the carriage, as he cried:

"My good lads, I was attacked again by highwaymen to-night. I shot one of them, and he is in that carriage now. Take him out and guard him well, while some of you ride off for the officers of the law and the doctor. I don't think he is as badly hurt as he pretends, but treat him kindly for all that. If he escapes from you, I will whale the life out of every one of you."

While the stablemen were dragging the prisoner away the young lord seized his step-mother by the arm and drew her aside on the lawn as he said to her, in low and stern tones:

"Lady Craven, do you propose to keep on with this fight until I kill your son?"

The venomous woman was boiling with rage and fear, yet she glared boldly at the face of the speaker as she demanded:

"Why do you allude to my son, sir? Do you dare intimate that he was with Captain Slasher to-night?"

The young lord chuckled again as he replied:

"My suspicions turn that way, but I will be convinced on the subject before I say more. One word I will say, however, and that is—beware!"

Having uttered the warning the young lord turned and entered the hall whistling a lively air.

Rose Dashwood soon rushed downstairs to meet him, crying in excited tones:

"What is this I hear, cousin? Is it true that you were attacked by highwaymen again to-night?"

"It is true, but don't be alarmed, Rose."

The young lord then gave a lively account of his adventures in the dark-wooded road, and he concluded by saying, in subdued tones:

"So you see that the highwaymen, or one of them, at least, is an old friend of mine. If I mistake not, the other two are even blood relations of mine."

The young lady clasped her cousin by the arm as she asked in agitated tones:

"Who are they?"

"I cannot and will not answer you at present, Rose, as I have made up my mind not to make any accusations unless I am firmly convinced of their truth. If I mistake not another attempt will be made on my life this very night. Fear not, however, as I am on my guard, and the good dog and the Boy of Donnybrook will sleep in the room with me."

"But can you trust that miserable rascal, my dear cousin?"

"Yes, I think I can trust him now. The rascal has a mortal terror of me and of the dog, as he knows that Raun would fly at him if he makes the least move against me again. Here he comes now with the dog, and I want to have a few words with him."

The faithful dog flew to embrace his young master, while he ascended the stairs as he said to the Boy of Donnybrook:

"Follow me, as I want to have a few words with you."

The young lord led the way up to his own bedroom, followed by the dog and the Boy of Donnybrook.

When he had secured the door of his bedroom he turned abruptly on his half-brother, saying:

"I have just shot Captain Slasher down by the wood, and I wounded another of the rascals at the same time. He has confessed that his two companions were Dick Craven and Jack Burke, and that you were in the plot to murder me the other night. Confess, you treacherous hound, or I'll strangle you where you stand!"

"Forgive me, brother, as the rascals forced me into the

wicked plot. On my solemn oath, I have had nothing to do with them or their wicked work since that night."

"I thought as much. Now, you miserable dog, beware how you act hereafter, or I will flay you alive with my own hands. I will make a man of you, or I will kill you!"

CHAPTER XI.

ANOTHER CHANGE.

"What am I to do?" asked the Boy of Donnybrook, as he saw that his half-brother had something important to propose to him.

"You will take your own place again."

"Do you mean it, Dan?"

"I do mean it, and here are my reasons for the change. Two attempts have been made on my life within a very short time, and the third will be attempted ere long."

He interrupted, saying: "Then you want me to be killed in your place, so that you can come forward with the paper and take your stand against the others?"

"And what if I should? Have I not braved enough already for a cowardly cur who is base enough to intrigue with his own sworn enemies against me?"

The cowardly rascal was trembling with apprehension, as he felt certain that his brave brother was about to place him in a dangerous position, and he could only gasp forth:

"Go on, Dan; but for goodness' sake remember that I can never be as brave as you are."

"You may be yet. What I want to tell you now is this. As I said, two bold attempts have been made on my life, and one more will be made before long. I am not afraid for myself, but I am for you."

"Then why do you want me to take your place now, Dan?" asked the cowardly lad.

"Because I can protect the pair of us and expose your enemies better while playing my own old part for a few days. If you don't want to do as I say, I'll throw up at once and you can fight out the battle by yourself."

"I am willing to do whatever you say."

"Then that is settled. Now, then, let us hasten to change places again, and I will give you your instructions."

"Is Rose Dashwood to know about the change again?"

"To be sure, she is. Rose is a brave girl, and as true as steel."

"Will I have to run much danger to-night?"

"Not if you play your part well, as I will be at your back to save you. If you falter for a moment, heaven help you is all I can say."

With the aid of a few glasses of brandy the old Boy of Donnybrook nerved his cowardly brother for the coming struggle.

In the meantime Dick Craven had returned to the hall in a secret manner, and he was then consulting with his venomous mother.

The hopeful young rascal was very much discouraged over their second failure, and he was fearful that Captain Slasher would compromise with the young lord and betray his accomplices.

"I tell you what it is, mother," he said, "that Slasher is a cad, and he will be certain to inform on us if he has to face the music."

The cunning woman frowned as she replied:

"Nonsense, Dick. The gallant captain has behaved like a hero so far, and he will brazen it out if he must, but we must aid him in escaping."

"How is that to be done, mother?"

"Through the Boy of Donnybrook."

"Then why not take him in hands, mother? Now is just the time we want him. Get him on our side, by hook or crook, and we will soon rescue Slasher and get Craven out of the way forever."

The cunning woman pondered over the proposition for some moments ere she replied:

"I will take the fellow in hands. Just wait here a few minutes until I see if I can find him."

Mother and son had been sitting in Lady Craven's private room, and she then slipped out to make some inquiries about the Boy of Donnybrook.

On reaching the main hall the cunning woman encountered Rose Dashwood, who said to her:

"Aunt, have you heard that Cousin Craven was attacked again to-night by the highwaymen?"

Lady Craven laughed in an ironical manner as she replied, in sneering tones:

"I begin to imagine that your gallant cousin is in league with the highwaymen."

"What do you mean, aunt?"

"I mean that it is very curious that he should defeat three armed men, and that one of them should turn out to be Captain Slasher. Ha, ha, ha! What an idea! It is ridiculous to imagine that Captain Slasher would turn highwayman."

The young woman laughed merrily in turn as she responded:

"Yes, aunt, I think Slasher will cut a very ridiculous figure when he graces the gallows. Lord Craven feels assured that he will soon take the others, and I only wish in my heart that he may."

And Rose Dashwood retreated up the stairs to her own bedroom, laughing merrily the while.

After looking for the Boy of Donnybrook for some time, Lady Craven encountered him in the back hallway as he was hastening out to the stables with his big dog, and she saluted him in cautious tones, saying:

"I want to speak with you."

Without waiting for a reply, the woman hastened to her sitting-room, and the Boy of Donnybrook and the dog followed her.

When the old Boy of Donnybrook entered the room with his dog, he found Dick Craven lolling in a chair, while his mother took a seat beside him, saying:

"Dolan, you have heard about the second attempt on Lord Craven, I presume?"

The Boy of Donnybrook fumbled with his hat and rubbed the faithful dog on the head in a nervous manner, as he replied:

"To be sure, ma'am."

The lady was eying him closely, and she continued, in cold and stern tones:

"I understand that you were suspected of robbing Lord Craven when he fell on the road on the night when the first attack was made on him. Is that true, sir?"

"Not at all, ma'am."

Dick Craven sprang from his seat and faced the Boy of Donnybrook with a scowling brow as he retorted:

"It is the truth, you lying hound. I can get three witnesses to prove that they saw you kneeling beside Craven and rifling his pockets."

"That will do, Richard," interposed his mother. "Now, Dolan, it may be as well for you to understand that your neck is in danger unless you stand by your agreement made with your friends."

The old Boy of Donnybrook pretended to be fearfully terrified, and he gasped forth:

"What am I to do at all, Lady Craven? Sure, the young lord threatens to take my life if I turn on him again, and you threaten me with the gallows if I don't, and between you all my life is a torment to me."

A wicked smile played on the face of the cunning woman, as she responded:

"Then you should be true to those who have the will and the power to serve and protect you. Where were you going when I saw you?"

"I was going out to the stable to look after Captain Slasher, Lady Craven."

"That is well. Where is the young lord at present?"

"He is sound asleep up in his bed, ma'am, and he seems to be worn out after the night."

"What instructions have you received about Captain Slasher from your master?"

The old Boy of Donnybrook hesitated to answer, and the lady continued in threatening tones:

"If you do not answer me freely and aid us also, you will be publicly denounced and sent to prison, and I am certain that Lord Craven cannot save your neck. Now tell us what your instructions are."

The Boy of Donnybrook trembled while the lady was speaking, and he replied in nervous tones:

"I am ordered to watch over Captain Slasher until morning, ma'am, with two other lads, and to give him up to the police then."

Lady Craven arose on the instant and went to a cupboard, while her son addressed the Boy of Donnybrook, saying:

"Do you know, Dolan, that you were never so near death as you were last night?"

"You don't say so, sir?" gasped the Boy of Donnybrook.

"How is that at all?"

"Do you remember when you were out in the woods with your dog?"

"That I do, sir."

"Well, then, two friends of mine had their guns pointed at you at the time, and you would have been riddled with duck-shot were it not for me. If you do not stand by your bargain with us I will not spare you much longer."

The old Boy of Donnybrook trembled all over again as he gasped forth:

"What a narrow escape I had, sir. Oh, Master Dick, keep them from killing me, and I will do anything you say."

Lady Craven advanced from the cupboard at the moment holding a large black bottle in her hand, as she said:

"If you want to live do what I tell you now."

"To be sure, I will, ma'am."

"Then take this bottle of brandy out to the stables with you and share it with the two rascals who are going to keep watch over Captain Slasher with you. Do you understand me, Dolan?"

"To be sure, ma'am."

"Then do as I tell you, or your life will not be spared another day. Captain Slasher must be rescued to-night, or he will be certain to denounce you and your associates before the magistrate in the morning."

The Boy of Donnybrook seized the bottle eagerly and put it in his pocket, as he responded:

"I'll do what you ask me, ma'am, and no mistake. Captain Slasher will soon have a chance to be off with himself, and bad luck to him."

Lady Craven then gave some explicit instructions to the Boy of Donnybrook, and the sly rogue soon retreated to the stables with his dog as he said to himself:

"I knew what they would be up to, and they would have worked it, too, if I had not thought of this game, as that cur above has not the pluck of a calf."

Lady Craven and her son remained in the sitting-room anxiously awaiting the result of the Boy of Donnybrook's work, while the other members of the family had retired to rest for the night.

About half an hour after the departure of the Boy of Donnybrook for the stables, stealthy footsteps could be heard in the hall, and Lady Craven moved to open the door as she said in joyous tones:

"Here they are."

Captain Slasher, with the Boy of Donnybrook and his dog, soon slipped into the room, and Lady Craven greeted them in subdued tones, saying:

"This is excellent. Now, Captain Slasher, we must make a final effort to crush the reptile who threatens to destroy you."

The gallant captain appeared to be in high glee over his escape, but when he heard the words thus uttered and noticed the deadly glare in the eyes of the vindictive woman, he drew back saying:

"The deuce take me, Lady Craven, if I have not had enough of fighting against that young fellow's luck, and I mean to clear off for England at once."

A fierce and scornful smile appeared on the woman's face as she retorted, in bitter tones:

"You are a coward, Captain Slasher, and I regret the promise I made you. As it is, you must stand and stay by us until the struggle is over."

"What do you mean, Lady Craven?"

"My meaning is very plain, sir. You would fly like a coward when we have given you your liberty, and leave us alone to deal with the young serpent who would have crushed you to the dust were it not for us."

The gay captain shrugged his shoulders, as he retorted:

"Gad, Lady Craven, the fellow has crushed me very much as it is. He has ruined me on the turf, and I am all but a beggar. If I do not make off, he will send me to prison in the morning, and then I will have the ugly gallows staring me in the face. I must be off."

The vindictive woman drew a pistol and aimed it at the breast of her late admirer, as she hissed forth, in venomous tones:

"You will not be off, Captain Slasher. Do you suppose that I do not know your game? If we did not rescue you, you were prepared to denounce us to Lord Craven in the morning, so as to save your own wretched neck."

The gallant Captain quailed before the furious woman as he stammered forth:

"What would you have me do, then?"

"I would have you act the part of a man and stand by your friends. Lord Craven must be put out of the way to-night, and you must aid us. This fellow here will serve us also. Will you not, Dolan?"

The Boy of Donnybrook hesitated a little before he replied, in trembling tones:

"I suppose I must now, ma'am."

"What do you say, Captain Slasher?" demanded the lady. The gallant captain shrugged his shoulders again ere he replied:

"I have no choice but to comply with your command, Lady Craven."

CHAPTER XII.

A DARK PLOT.

When Dan Dolan proposed that his half-brother should again take his place as the lord of Craven Hall the old Boy of Donnybrook had a deep object in view.

The brave fellow could not rely on his treacherous and cowardly relative in dealing with the enemies who were driven to desperation, and he resumed his own place in order to be better able to watch those enemies by pretending to act with them again.

During his residence at the hall as lord and master of the place the old Boy of Donnybrook had a splendid opportunity of judging the characters of his enemies.

Among all those enemies there was none more to be feared than Lady Craven, as she possessed one of those natures that would never be conquered save by oppression and defeat.

The Boy of Donnybrook felt that the vindictive woman would soon make another attempt on the young lord's life, but he did not anticipate that the bold woman would try to put her design into effect that night.

Having gained Captain Slasher and the old Boy of Donnybrook to engage in the new plot the bold woman said:

"You will all perceive that we cannot dally with the young rascal any longer, or he will destroy us all. Captain Slasher has been already denounced as one of the highwaymen who attacked him to-night, and I am certain that he suspects Jack Burke, my son here, and the Boy of Donnybrook also. It is therefore to your interest to put a stop to all the proceedings that he may take against you."

"How are we to get him out of the way, then, Lady Craven?" asked the gallant captain.

"He sleeps with one eye open and pistols under his pillow," said Dick Craven.

The wicked woman bent her eyes on the Boy of Donnybrook as she asked:

"Are you not in his full confidence again?"

"That is more than I can tell you, ma'am. I can't make him out at all since the night the dog here caught me by the arm."

The faithful dog licked his master's hand at the moment, and the keen woman noticed the movement as she remarked:

"But I see that the dog is very much attached to you now and I cannot understand why he should fly at you as he did that night."

Dick Craven scowled at the animal as he said:

"That brute should be put out of the way altogether before we attempt anything against the cad up-stairs again."

Lady Craven fixed her piercing eyes on the Boy of Donnybrook as she said in subdued tones:

"Why can't we bribe those fellows whom you brought here to serve your heartless half-brother?"

"That would be a hard matter to do, ma'am. Whatever the young lord may have been some time ago he has been very kind and free to the boys around him of late and they are all ready to die for him."

"Hang the fellow, that is what I can't understand," said Dick Craven. "Before you came around here with those fellows from the village he was the most cowardly cad in Ireland, and almost too mean to live, but ever since then he has been generous and brave."

"That is not the question," interrupted Lady Craven. "We discussed the subject before, and we agreed that the cunning wretch had been playing a part for years past. He must be put out of the way and you are the one to do it."

As the vindictive woman spoke she clapped her hands on the Boy of Donnybrook's shoulder, while the fellow drew back as he replied:

"Sure, Lady Craven, how am I to do it when three men with pistols failed in two attempts?"

Lady Craven stepped at once to the closet and drew forth a small flask which she handed to the Boy of Donnybrook, saying:

"Manage to give him as much of that as you gave to one of the men in the stable to-night, and he will then be at our mercy."

As the woman spoke she forced the drug into the hands of the unwilling Boy of Donnybrook.

"You give him the drug," said Lady Craven, "and leave the rest to us."

In the meantime the cowardly young man upstairs was in a fearful state of nervous excitement after the real Boy of Donnybrook left him in his bedroom.

While the young fellow could not be contented in his humble position for one short year, he had no sooner been reinstated in his old position when fresh terror seized him.

The mere fact that Dan Dolan insisted on his taking his old position again made him suspicious of the old Boy of Donnybrook, and he said to himself:

"Why does he want me to take my place again if he did not fear that he would be killed himself if he kept on. Now he wants me to be killed, and then he will step forward with the marriage certificate, denounce my murderers, and take my place forever. That is his game, if I am fool enough to let him play it, but I am not."

Although the cowardly rascal was trembling with excitement he soon made up his mind as to his course of action, and that was to fly from the hall, throw himself on the protection of the police, and denounce all who had been intriguing against him, including the Boy of Donnybrook himself among the number.

Having thus made up his mind, the mean hound surveyed himself in the mirror, and he thought of Rose Dashwood while he said to himself:

"I wonder if she would recognize the change now. Hang me if I don't see her, late as it is, and secure the marriage certificate which Dan Dolan gave her to keep for him. Late as it is Rose may be up yet after the excitement of the night."

With that purpose in view the cunning rascal secured all the money he could lay his hands on, and stole from the room in quest of Rose, as he said to himself:

"She will not know me in the dark, anyway, and Dolan could not have told her of the change yet. If I get the certificate I will defy the Boy of Donnybrook, or make him crush all my enemies for me."

Stealing downstairs to the room occupied by Rose Dashwood the cunning rascal knocked gently at the door.

After a slight delay a soft voice inquired:

"Who is there?"

"It is me, cousin Rose. I want to see you to-night on very important business."

The sly rascal was not a bad actor, and he managed to mimic the voice of his brave half-brother in a manner that would deceive most people.

The young girl had not yet retired to bed, and believing that the brave Boy of Donnybrook and true lord desired to consult with her about the murderous attack committed on him that night she at once answered:

"I will be out with you in a few moments, cousin."

When the young girl did appear in the hallway the false rascal drew her into a dark corner, saying:

"Dear Rose, I am compelled to go off to-night on the hunt for one of the rascals who shot at me. As I fear that my sneaking half-brother may get possession of that paper I gave you, I concluded that it is best to put it in keeping of a lawyer in Dublin. Will you please give it to me if it is handy at all."

The young girl was not at all suspicious at the moment and she promptly answered:

"Certainly, cousin. Wait here and I will hasten into the room for it. But tell me one thing."

"What is that, Rose?"

"Are you certain about those who attacked you to-night?"

"I am very certain."

"Can you tell me who they are? I know that Captain Slasher was one of them."

"There is no doubt of that, Rose. And I am almost certain that Dick Craven and Jack Burke were the others, but I do not want to accuse them of the crime until Slasher confesses."

"Then who do you expect to arrest to-night?"

"Jack Burke. Now hasten, like a good girl, and give me the document, as I must hurry away on the sly as I fear that miserable brother of mine is in with my enemies again and on the watch for me."

The young girl hastened into the bedroom almost on the instant, and she was soon back with the precious paper in her hand as she said in low tones:

"I only hope, dear cousin, that you will soon defeat all your enemies and take your proper place in society forever."

The sly rascal attempted to put his arm around her waist as he asked in tender tones:

"Will you become my wife when I do, Rose?"

Now it so happened that the brave Boy of Donnybrook in all his dealings with the young girl had never made any tender advances, as he felt that it would not be honorable to do so while acting in a false position.

The important paper was already in the grasp of the cunning rogue when the words and actions just described aroused Rose's suspicions, and she at once snatched it away from him and then pushed him rudely away as she replied:

"I detect your voice now, you wretch, but I will baffle your vile scheme."

The desperate fellow became at once alarmed, fearing that the young girl would expose him to the old Boy of Donnybrook, and he at once sprang at her and seized her by the throat as he hissed into her ear:

"I am the true and original Lord Craven, and I will have the paper. I am compelled to fly for my life to-night, as the cowardly Boy of Donnybrook has broken his bargain with me and went over to my enemies. Give me the paper that I may defy him to do his worst."

As the rude rascal spoke he endeavored to force the paper from the young girl's hand, but she resisted bravely, as she gasped back:

"I will die ere I give you the paper, you mean wretch. Take your hands off me, or I will scream aloud for help."

During the struggle that then took place the active girl drew the rascal toward the door of her bedroom, but she was not able to speak a loud word or utter a single scream, as he pressed his hand closer on her throat, while he replied:

"I will have that paper if I have to choke the breath out of your body."

While thus speaking the false lord drew the brave girl into her bedroom, while he continued to choke her until she was purple in the face.

Rose Dashwood continued to struggle as if for dear life, but the wicked rascal secured the paper at length, flung her fainting on the floor, and dashed out into the hallway, as he said to himself:

"I will defy them all now."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STRIFE OF THE HALF-BROTHERS.

When the old Boy of Donnybrook released Captain Slasher and pretended to go into the plot against the young lord, his main object was to get into the confidence of Lady Craven, so that he could expose her at an early day.

He had no intention of letting the prisoner escape that night, however, unless he felt assured he could soon lay his hands on him again.

Having pretended to work in harness with the plotters, the old Boy of Donnybrook and his faithful dog retreated upstairs to his brother's room, and great was his surprise to find that the rascal had flown.

After looking around the Old Boy of Donnybrook also found that his pistols and ready money were gone, and he stood in perplexity for a moment as he said to himself:

"What can the fellow be up to now? I suppose he thought his life was in danger to-night, and he has made off to hide somewhere."

At that moment a faint tap was heard at the door, while the faithful dog gave a friendly salutation at the same time.

On hastening to open the door Dan Dolan was surprised to see Rose Dashwood standing there and looking very pale and excited as she said, gazing intently into his face the while:

"Are you not the real Dan Dolan?"

The Boy of Donnybrook saw that something out of the way had occurred to the gentle girl, but he at once answered:

"To be sure, miss. What is wrong with you at all, what can I do for you?"

Rose drew him out into the hallway without the slightest hesitation and proceeded at once to give an account of the cowardly trick which had been played upon her by the false young lord.

The Boy of Donnybrook ground his teeth with rage and clenched his hand, as he said:

"Never mind about the loss of the paper, miss, as I don't care for that at all, but won't I pay that miserable rascal for daring to choke you."

"But I do mind about the paper," replied the young girl, "as I fear that he has already destroyed it. Why did you change places with him to-night?"

"In order to save his life, and he is not worth it. The rascal thinks that I wanted to rob him, and that I was up to some game against him, but I'll make him suffer for this night's work to you."

"He told me that he was hastening away to Dublin, and I believe him. Could not you hasten after him and secure the paper if he has not destroyed it, as I can never be happy again if I am the means of depriving you of your birth-right."

The excited youth grasped the young girl's hand and pressed it warmly, as he said:

"As heaven is my judge, miss, I don't care a pin for the title and the estate, as I only wanted to act the manly part for him, but now I will show him that I am his master in every way. I must be off."

"Then you intend to follow him to-night?"

"Without waiting a minute. If anything should happen to the poor real Boy of Donnybrook be good enough to remember, Miss Rose, that there was not a mean drop of blood in his veins."

The Boy of Donnybrook then gave the young girl to understand that there was a new plot formed against the young lord, but he concluded it was better not to fully expose the conspirators at present.

After a somewhat tender parting with Rose, Dan Dolan then hastened down to inform the others of the flight of their intended victim.

Lady Craven was in a fearful rage at first, and she accused the Boy of Donnybrook of having aided in the flight, but he soon convinced her of his innocence in that regard.

The poor fellow was then in a fearful quandary as to how he should proceed under the circumstances.

He did not care to let Captain Slasher slip out of his grasp that night, while he was most anxious to set out in pursuit of his cowardly half-brother.

After consulting with his false friends, the Boy of Donnybrook hastened out into the stable, where he discovered that the fugitive lord had not availed himself of a horse in his flight.

Saddling the brave steed who had borne him so safely over the iron gate the young man called his dog and rode away in pursuit.

It had been agreed with the others that Captain Slasher and Dick Craven should remain at the hall to search for the fugitive, who may be still concealed in some of the apartments, as Lady Craven supposed.

Riding fearlessly along the road leading to Dublin, the Boy of Donnybrook brooded over the conduct of his cowardly brother, as he muttered aloud:

"I would forgive him all but his cowardly treatment of the dear angel who has been so true to the pair of us. Bad as Lady Craven and her son are, the scamp is even worse, and it would serve him right to clap him in an asylum for the rest of his life."

On reaching the village of Donnybrook, Dan Dolan learned that young Lord Craven had arrived at the tavern there a short time before, and that he had hired a saddle horse to proceed to Dublin.

Urging on his own willing steed the angry fellow renewed the pursuit, while he said to himself:

"What a lucky chance it would be if the real highwaymen did set on the rascal before he got to Dublin."

Although the Boy of Donnybrook had only his heavy riding-whip with him, he had no fears of an attack on himself, as he knew that the knights of the road would not care to stop one in his mean attire.

About two miles from the village of Donnybrook the watchful ear of the Boy of Donnybrook caught the sound of horses galloping on ahead of him, and he pressed his own steed the more, as he said to himself:

"I'll wager that is the rascal. I wonder if he will have the courage to turn on me with the pistols?"

At that moment a report of a pistol rang out ahead of him, while the faithful dog sent forth a loud bark.

Urging on his steed again, the gallant Boy of Donnybrook

prepared for a conflict, as he muttered aloud, while another report fell on his ear at the same time:

"That looks like sharp work ahead."

The dog set up another loud cry as they pressed on, and then a wail was borne to their ears, as if coming from some one in distress.

The turn in the road brought the combatants to view in the form of three persons on horseback, two of whom wore dark masks on their faces.

These two persons were attacking the third horseman, who was retreating back toward the Boy of Donnybrook, while his pursuers kept blazing away at him, as one of them cried:

"Stand and deliver!"

The fugitive did not turn to resist, but kept spurring his horse as he yelled for mercy, and Dan soon recognized the voice.

It was that of his miserable brother, who was flying from one danger only to incur another.

Just as the Boy of Donnybrook was within about twenty yards of his brother the horse of the latter received a shot in one of the hind legs, and he fell heavily to the ground, flinging his rider over into the ditch.

Fortunately for Dan Dolan the highwaymen had fired their weapons at the time, while he rode at them, crying:

"Fair play forever, and two against one will never do at all."

The two highwaymen made at Dan with great vigor, using their pistols as clubs, but he used his riding whip with so much force as to send them sprawling on the ground in very short order, the dog helping him.

One of the men sprang to his feet again, and darted away across the field, crying:

"Come on, Foxey."

The highwayman's horse obeyed the call and bounded after his master, while the Boy of Donnybrook belabored the other fellow until he yelled for mercy, crying:

"Don't pound me to death, and I will surrender."

The Boy of Donnybrook laughed at the fellow for a moment, while his cowardly brother had risen from the ditch and was watching the scene without saying a word.

Lord Craven had recognized the Boy of Donnybrook, and he trembled more at his appearance than he did at the assault of the two highwaymen.

Having punished the highwaymen enough the Boy of Donnybrook darted suddenly on his half-brother, seized his weapons and placed them in his own pocket, while he cried to the highwayman:

"If you offer to budge, my fine fellow, I'll put a bullet in your back very soon."

And then, without giving the cowardly lord the least warning, he commenced to lash him with the whip in the most unmerciful manner as he cried:

"You know what this is for, you hound. I'll teach you to choke young ladies, you miserable spalpeen. It is your life I ought to take this very night."

The cowardly lord fell on his knees and begged for mercy, while the highwayman kept staring at the pair as he watched his chance for making an attempt to escape with his horse.

The excited Boy of Donnybrook kept his eye on the robber, however, while he belabored his cringing brother until he was tired.

Turning to the highwayman then, and pointing a pistol at him, the Boy of Donnybrook said:

"Now you march on before us and you take his horse, you mean hound."

The Boy of Donnybrook sprang on his own good steed at the same time and pointed back to the village of Donnybrook.

The miserable lord mounted the highwayman's horse, and the two brothers rode on together, while the Boy of Donnybrook addressed the highwayman on foot, crying:

"Walk on ahead of us, and if you offer to run, the dog will be at your heels."

Raun had taken an active part in the fray, as he had caught one of the men by the legs at the first onset of his master and pulled him from his horse.

When the Boy of Donnybrook turned on his half-brother, however, the faithful animal was inclined to spring at the wretch also, but his master kept him back, crying:

"Be quiet, Raun, and watch the other fellow."

As the half-brothers were riding along together the Boy

of Donnybrook turned to the crestfallen rascal beside him, saying:

"What were you up to now?"

"I was going to place myself under the protection of the police," was the sullen reply, "as you all want to murder me."

The two young men spoke in such low tones that the highwayman could not overhear them, while the Boy of Donnybrook rejoined:

"You must be very much afraid of murder when you tried your hand at it yourself to-night, you cowardly scamp. I should stretch you lifeless on the ground only that would be too easy a death for you. Now, listen to me, and I will tell you what I want."

The dastardly lord glared at his brave brother, as he grumbled forth:

"I am sick and tired of living as I do, and I won't stand it any longer."

"Just hand over that paper to me before you die then."

"What paper do you mean?"

"No humbugging with me, as you know what I mean well enough, you sly rogue. Out with it or I'll on to you with the whip again."

As the Boy of Donnybrook spoke, he raised the lash in a threatening manner, while the fierce dog also made a bound at the treacherous young rascal.

"Down Raun, down Raun," cried the Boy of Donnybrook, "and keep a watch on that other chap ahead."

The dog did bound on after the highwayman, while the brave fellow addressed his brother again, saying:

"Out with that paper!"

The cowardly rascal at once set the spurs to his horse and darted forward, crying:

"I have lost the paper, and I won't stand here to be abused by you."

The Boy of Donnybrook set the spurs to his horse also, and galloped after the fugitive, crying:

"You can't get off that way. Watch that fellow, good dog, and bring him along to the village."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BOY OF DONNYBROOK IN FULL SWING.

It did not take the Boy of Donnybrook very long to see that the horse on which his cowardly brother was mounted was very fast indeed.

As a general thing highwaymen rode splendid steeds, and the one then in use by young Lord Craven was no exception to the rule.

Realizing that the chase may be a long one, and caring very little about winning reputation as a thief-taker, Dan Dolan whistled to his fleet and faithful dog as he said to himself:

"The mischief blow me if I don't let the poor fellow go. Maybe he is not half as bad as the rascal I am after now."

The Boy of Donnybrook had a good horse under him, but he was more fitted for a long steeplechase than for a short burst of speed, and the anxious fellow felt that the chase would be a long one if the horses were left to themselves.

The Boy of Donnybrook did not intend to give his treacherous brother full swing on the highwayman's horse, and for that reason he called on Raun to aid him in his pursuit.

The faithful dog sprang after him on the instant, leaving the highwayman happy at his own unexpected release.

There was not a greyhound in the whole country able to outfoot Raun in a race after a hare, and the Boy of Donnybrook was well aware of the fact.

The intelligent animal would also obey his master as freely in hunting down a human being as in the pursuit of four-legged game, while he seldom or ever failed in his object.

The dog had no sooner reached his master's side at full speed than the Boy of Donnybrook cried:

"After him, Raun, and stop him for me."

At that moment young Lord Craven was urging the highwayman's horse to his utmost speed, and they were dashing into the village of Donnybrook.

Fast as the horse flew, however, the powerful dog gained on them at every stride, and as the young coward turned in his saddle he saw the large animal sweeping down on him like some wild beast.

The cowardly rascal feared the dog in his rage almost as much as he did his master, and he urged on the horse the more as he yelled aloud:

"Call him off, Dan, and I'll give in."

"The mischief thank you," yelled the Boy of Donnybrook. "Stop the horses, Raun, but don't hurt them."

The dog flew ahead of the foremost horse, only to wheel around suddenly and plant himself in the middle of the road, while he commenced barking in the most furious manner.

The young lord pulled up the horse as he cried:

"I give in, Dan, and for heaven's sake don't murder me."

They were out on the other side of the village when the Boy of Donnybrook darted up beside his treacherous brother, and fierce were the tones of his voice as he aimed a pistol at his head crying:

"Give me that paper, or——"

One glance at the Boy of Donnybrook's eyes was sufficient to show his cowardly brother that further fooling would be more than dangerous.

Putting his hand in his pocket he drew forth the marriage certificate as he said in the most cringing tones:

"Have mercy on me, Dan, as I did not know what I was doing to-night."

The Boy of Donnybrook placed the paper in his own pocket as he merely replied:

"Ride on, now."

The two brothers did ride slowly on together, while the dog capered on ahead in a joyous manner, as if to say to his master:

"I'll see that he will not play that game again."

Trembling with apprehension, the young lord cast stealthy glances at the Boy of Donnybrook as he asked himself:

"What is he up to now? Is it possible that he means to murder me in the dark road?"

When they did reach the dark-wooded road where the Boy of Donnybrook had been twice assaulted by his treacherous enemies, Dan Dolan drew suddenly up, saying in calm, cold tones:

"Now we will have a last settlement."

The young lord drew up at the same moment and gazed fearfully at his brother, as he whined forth:

"Oh, Dan, Dan, you don't mean to kill me!"

"Don't you deserve it?"

"Maybe I do; but I promise you that I'll do all you say after this, and that I'll never play you false in my whole life again if you will only spare my life."

Bitter was the smile on the face of the Boy of Donnybrook as he retorted, saying:

"I wouldn't trust you the length of my arm, and I won't. Now listen to me."

"I am listening, Dan; tell me at once that you are not going to kill me."

"You are not worth killing, you rascal. Now don't open your lips except to answer a question until I am through with you."

"I swear I won't, Dan."

The Boy of Donnybrook turned his horse into the wood as he said to the other:

"Follow me in here a little, so that we may not be interrupted on the road."

The young lord was more terrified still at the last order, but he did not dare offer resistance by word or action.

When they had gained a secluded spot the Boy of Donnybrook drew up again, saying:

"Now we are going to have a final settlement for good or bad."

"To be sure, Dan," responded the coward, "and I am ready to do anything you say."

"In the first place," commenced the Boy of Donnybrook, "what made you run away to-night?"

"I was afraid that you meant to turn on me with the others, Dan, and I have not a bit of courage left in me."

"You had courage enough to attack a helpless young lady, you miserable dog, and nearly choke her to death."

"I tell you I was out of my mind with fear, Dan. Why did you get me to change places again?"

"Because I knew that a crisis was coming. I knew that you would be called on as the Boy of Donnybrook, to play a part that you were not able for, and I am fully satisfied of the fact now. You infernal fool, what has led you to think that I would ever betray you?"

The cowardly fellow held down his head as he stammered forth:

"I—I can't tell, Dan."

"I can tell. You judge me by your own mean heart, and you thought that I would go in with your enemies, as you did

against me while you were playing the Boy of Donnybrook. Now let me tell you what has happened."

The candid fellow then went on to tell his cowardly brother of the plot formed by his enemies for conveying him to the mad-house, and he continued by saying:

"You see now, you cowardly hound, what I was driving at when I made the change."

"I can't say that I do, Dan."

"I will tell you, then. If you had been in my place with them to-night you would have let them carry me off to the mad-house, and then what a nice fix you would have been in as the Boy of Donnybrook. Why, man alive, they would have turned on you and put you out of the way in no time."

The cur shuddered at the idea, and he then asked:

"But what would you have done, Dan, if they had clapped you in the mad-house?"

A mischievous smile played on the face of the Boy of Donnybrook as he responded:

"You will see."

"Then you propose that we change places again this very night, Dan?"

"I do, on one condition."

The cunning coward pondered some moments ere he responded, saying:

"As you are now certain that they are engaged in a plot to murder me, why not turn on them at once as we are and denounce them?"

A scornful smile passed over the Boy of Donnybrook's face as he retorted:

"I am ready for that game if you think it will save you from them. To be sure, you can prove that Captain Slasher was one of the highwaymen to-night, but how are you to prove that Lady Craven, her son, and Jack Burke were implicated with him?"

"You could prove that from what you heard to-night, Dan."

"Could I, indeed? Would the oath of a poor Boy of Donnybrook like me be taken against such a great lady as your mother, more especially when it is well known that I am your half-brother and your steadfast friend for some time past?"

The cunning young lord reflected again, and he soon perceived the truth of the Boy of Donnybrook's suggestion, while he asked:

"Then what is to be done, Dan?"

"I know what I should do, after the manner in which I have been treated by you, but I have not the heart to do it, cowardly cur though you are."

"What should you do, Dan?"

"I should come out at once and declare that my mother was an honest woman, but not till after they had clapped you in a mad-house, as they are certain to do, if I back down on you."

The cunning coward shuddered again, as he whined forth:

"Oh, don't do that, Dan. If you see me through till the end of the year I swear to you that I will share half the estate with you."

"I would not give one penny for your promises, and I don't want any more of them. As I told you before, I'll stand to you till the year is up, but heaven help you if you try to play me false again. If you are now willing, we will change places again, but I am bound to have full swing, and you must obey me to the letter."

"I will—I will, Dan."

"Then let us go down to my old hut and we will change clothes again, while I give you full instructions how to act when we get back to the hall. All I say to you is this: The first sign of treachery I see on your part again will at once make me proclaim myself as the true Lord Craven, and I'll pitch you to the dogs, where you belong."

The Boy of Donnybrook then rode away toward the hut, while his treacherous brother followed him, muttering:

"I was a fool to turn against Dan until the year was up, as I am no match for the others, and he is. And then, if I once get hold of that paper again, won't I pay him for the lashing he gave me to-night?"

Within an hour after the two brothers rode back to the hall, the old Boy of Donnybrook again assuming the character of the young lord.

Lady Craven and her friends were still awake, and so was Rose Dashwood.

As the pretended lord entered the hallway he spoke aloud to the new Boy of Donnybrook, saying:

"Dan, I am very tired and I am going right to bed. You

go out and see if Slasher is all right in the stable yet, and report to me if he is not."

The brave fellow then retreated up toward his own bedroom, and in one of the upper hallways he met Rose Dashwood, who said to him:

"I recognized your voice, and I see that you have changed places again. What did you do to the treacherous wretch?"

"I gave him one of the finest thrashings ever a rascal got in his life, my dear cousin. Here is the paper for you again, and you may be certain that he will not choke you about it any more."

The young man then went on to give a hasty account of his adventures with his brother and the highwaymen, and concluded by saying:

"I am going to have full swing now against those who want to put me out of the way, and you may look out for more fun before very long."

Rose Dashwood was fully aware that her aunt and Dick Craven desired to get rid of young Lord Craven, but she could not suspect that they would be guilty of downright murder in carrying out their designs.

In the meantime, the acting Boy of Donnybrook was drawn into consultation with the conspirators, and he gave them a somewhat garbled account of his adventures on the road.

"What object had he in stealing away to Dublin in that way?" asked the woman.

"He says he was after the other highwaymen," replied the Boy of Donnybrook, "and that he was afraid to make any fuss about his going away, for fear you would be on his track again. After I helped him to beat the highwaymen it was an easy matter for me to coax him back here again."

"Then he has full confidence in you now," said the cunning woman.

"To be sure he has, my lady."

"Then we will carry out the original plan," suggested Dick Craven. "Hallo, Dan, where did you get all those welts on your face?"

"From the highwaymen, of course. The rascals fought like the very mischief before we drove them off."

"Where is the dog?" asked Captain Slasher, who was not quite at ease, and who longed to be away out of the dangerous neighborhood.

"The young lord begged of me to let the dog stop up in his room with him and I could not refuse."

After due consultation it was decided to change the plan of attack a little, and it was agreed that the attempt on the young lord should not be made until the following evening, when the keepers from the mad-house would be on hand to take him in charge.

On the following morning it was announced that Captain Slasher had escaped from the stable, and the young lord was furious over the carelessness of his drowsy stablemen, and he cried:

"I'll have all the rascals who attacked me safe before many nights if I have to turn highwayman myself in order to catch them."

Captain Slasher would have been very glad to slip away from the hall, but Lady Craven insisted on his remaining there in hiding to see the play out until the very end.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BOY OF DONNYBROOK AS A MADMAN.

According to the terms of old Lord Craven's will Lady Craven and her son could reside at the Hall until the marriage of the young lord.

Taking advantage of that clause, the bold woman determined not to be driven off until she had accomplished her evil designs.

The acting young lord took little or no notice of his step-mother and Dick Craven on the day after the assault, as he pretended to be very busy in hunting down the highwaymen.

The new Boy of Donnybrook held several conferences with Lady Craven and her friends during the day, and so well did he play his part this time that they did not have the slightest suspicion of his double dealing.

The young rascal also took occasion to have an interview with Rose Dashwood, during which he made the most abject apology for his conduct on the previous night.

The young girl treated the fellow with the utmost disdain, as she said to him:

"Whether you are lord or the Boy of Donnybrook hereafter, I wish you would never speak to me again. I would leave here at once were it not that I desired to see the play out as I hope to see it acted."

Rose Dashwood was not aware of the full extent of the plot against her cousin, but she had good reason to suspect that another movement would be made that night, and she was anxious for the result.

She noticed during the afternoon the arrival of three rough-looking fellows at the Hall, and soon after a grim-looking gentleman appeared there.

If the young lord had desired to give his step-mother the full opportunity of treating him as a lunatic, he could not have acted in a more outrageous manner than he did that evening on his return to the Hall.

Even Rose Dashwood was for a time puzzled to know whether he was really drunk and out of his mind, or only making a pretense of insanity.

In the first place he made for the stables, where he swore and raved at the men and boys, denouncing them all in furious terms for having permitted Captain Slasher to escape from him.

While at supper he flung things around in the most outrageous manner, swearing at the servants, at his step-mother, and Dick Craven, but they all noticed that he treated Rose Dashwood with the utmost courtesy.

Mother and son interchanged peculiar glances during the meal, as they knew that observant eyes were on them, in the heads of witnesses who would be able to testify in their behalf thereafter.

When mother and son were together again, the latter said: "What does he mean, mother? The infernal cad, if he does not intend to drive us out of the house!"

"That is what he is driving at, Richard, or else he must be furiously drunk. In any case, he is playing into our hands very nicely."

"Hang me, if I wouldn't like to give him a good horsewhipping before they take him away."

"Don't you attempt anything of the kind, my son. I notice that he has some other strange fellows out in the stable, and they would be certain to rush to his assistance if there was any sort of a row. We must wait until he is affected by the drug, which the Boy of Donnybrook has promised to give him as soon as he gets a chance."

Dick Craven shook his head, as he remarked:

"See here, mother, I begin to agree with Slasher, that there is something wrong with the Boy of Donnybrook."

"Nonsense, my son. Captain Slasher is afraid of his own shadow, and he would like to draw out. By the way, where is he?"

The mother and son were in the private apartment at the moment, and the woman was looking into a large ante-room, where the gallant soldier had been concealed during the day.

Before the son could make any reply to the question loud cries were heard out on the lawn, among which they could distinguish the words:

"We have got the rascal, my lord."

"He was trying to steal away, but we were too sharp for him, the rogue."

"And we gave him a good drubbing in the bargain, as you told us, my lord."

Mother and son both turned pale as they stared at each other, as they realized at once that the cowardly captain had been caught by the young lord's followers while attempting to make his escape from the Hall.

A sharp knock was heard at the room door at the moment, and the excited Boy of Donnybrook appeared before them, saying:

"Thunder, my lady, that fiend of a Slasher was trying to sneak off and they nabbed him. What a murdering pity, just as I had the young lord and the dog nicely dosed out in the billiard room."

"Is he asleep there now?" demanded the bold woman.

"As sound as a gravestone, ma'am."

"Then all will be well," she said, as her eyes flashed with animation. "You go out, Dan, and tell those fellows that Lord Craven is at supper, that he has sent you to have the prisoner taken to the stable again. I will see to dealing with the young puppy."

The new Boy of Donnybrook hastened away to obey, while Lady Craven and her son went to hold a brief consultation with the keeper of the madhouse.

In the meantime young Lord Craven was sleeping away in an easy-chair in the billiard room, while the faithful dog lay stretched at his feet, as if also affected by a narcotic.

Raun lifted his head at the moment, and he received a slight kick from his master, who spoke to him in low tones at the same time, saying:

"Didn't I tell you to play dead, you rascal? If you stir again until I call you I'll kick the life out of you."

And he did give the animal another harmless kick, as if to emphasize his command.

The door was then opened quietly, and Dick Craven put in his head for a moment, when he turned to address his mother, saying:

"The game is safe now, and the dog is as drunk as his new master."

Lady Craven then stepped into the room with four men, and, pointing to the sleeper, she said:

"There is your patient."

The dog raised his head a little, but another slight kick from his master caused him to lower it again, while the old Boy of Donnybrook said to himself:

"The fun is commencing now in earnest."

The four men stole over toward the sleeper, and each grasping the chair, they lifted him bodily in it and commenced to bear him from the room.

At that moment Rose Dashwood sprang into the billiard room from another entrance, crying:

"What is the meaning of this, Aunt Craven?"

The cunning woman at once faced her niece in a bold manner, crying:

"The meaning of it is this, Rose: that young wretch is out of his mind and I, as his guardian, am consigning him to a lunatic asylum for the present."

"Hold, hold, men," cried Rose, "as I can assure you that he is not mad."

"How can you say so, Rose?" cried her aunt, "when you saw the outrageous manner in which he acted this evening? Away with him, men."

The keepers from the lunatic asylum had just reached the door with their burden when the young lord fell forward out of the chair on the floor, while Rose sprang for a pitcher of water and dashed the contents in his face, crying:

"Arouse yourself, cousin, and call for help. They must not bear you away if I can help it."

As the young girl spoke she sprang to one of the windows and called out, in thrilling tones:

"Help! Murder! They're taking off Lord Craven to a madhouse. Help—help!"

Whether it was the cold water or the voice of the young girl that aroused the sleeper, none present could ever tell, but he did rub his eyes on the instant, and sprang to his feet, crying:

"What is the row here?"

At the same moment six or seven stout fellows dashed into the billiard room with clubs in their hands, and set on the keepers with great fury, while the big dog sprang up also and made a dash among them, yelping and barking at a furious rate.

The old Boy of Donnybrook stared around for a moment and then commenced to strike out with the others, aiming first at Dick Craven, and then at the gentleman who was the owner of the madhouse.

Lady Craven attempted to retreat from the scene while she cried out:

"Murder! You wretches, what do you mean by this outrage on the officers of the law?"

Rose Dashwood drew back out of harm's way as she said to herself:

"I think I see a little light now."

The keepers and the owner of the asylum were pounded in an unmerciful manner, and they kept crying for quarter until they were flung out on the lawn in the roughest way possible.

The young lord kept pounding away at Dick Craven until the young man's mother and Rose Dashwood both caught his arm, the latter crying:

"For mercy sake, don't kill him, cousin!"

Dick Craven was yelling with rage and pain at the moment, as the big dog had fastened his fangs in his legs, and even when his brother stopped pounding him Raun still held on like grim death.

Having a little mercy on the young rascal, the young lord at last called the dog off, crying:

"Let go, good dog, as I think you have given him a dose now that he won't forget."

Lady Craven was almost beside herself with rage and disappointment, but the bold woman mastered her emotions as she turned on her supposed stepson, crying:

"What is the meaning of your attack on my son, you mad wretch?"

The young lord smiled in a malicious manner, as he inquired:

"What is the meaning of the late attack on me?"

"My meaning is clear enough. You have been acting in such an outrageous manner lately that I have decided to put you under restraint. The gentleman whom your friends have treated in such a vile manner is the owner of an asylum, and he holds the certificates of two respectable physicians pronouncing you insane."

The young lord gave vent to a peculiar whistle and then exclaimed:

"That is the game, is it? Well, it will take a good many keepers to take me, I warrant you."

The new Boy of Donnybrook entered the room at the moment and cast a terrified glance at Lady Craven and her son before he addressed his half-brother, saying:

"My lord, some of the boys have taken the prisoner that escaped from the stable last night."

The young lord clapped his hands in great glee and danced a little, as he cried:

"That is glorious news, Dan. Bring the rascal in here as I want to deal with him."

The new Boy of Donnybrook cast another piteous glance on his late fellow-conspirators on leaving the room, as if he meant to say:

"It is not my fault if it has turned out so."

Lady Craven was bathing the wound on her son's leg when the Boy of Donnybrook and two other fellows dragged Captain Slasher into the room.

The gallant officer was in a terrible condition, as his eyes were blackened, his outer garments almost torn off his back, and he bore several marks of ill-usage on his face and body.

The young lord sprang forward to salute the prisoner, crying:

"What in the fury is the matter with you, Slasher, and why do you look so pale?"

Captain Slasher was deadly pale, indeed, and to add to his terror the man behind him slipped a rope around his neck at the moment.

"They have been threatening to hang me after nearly mobbing me to death," he gasped forth.

"How is that, boys?" asked the young lord.

"To be sure, sir," answered one. "Didn't you tell us to drub the life out of him and hang him up afterwards if we caught him after he escaped. We found him stealing down in the orchard and we obeyed your orders, of course. Will we finish him at once?"

The gallant soldier dropped on his knees and held up his hands to the young lord as he cried:

"Oh, my lord, my lord, don't let the rascals murder me, and I will tell you something worth hearing, 'pon my soul I will."

Dick Craven groaned with pain and apprehension, while his bold mother cried:

"You cowardly fool, don't you know that they dare not take the law in their own hands that way. Lord Craven, if you tolerate such an outrage I will denounce you and bear witness against you."

The young lord did not appear to pay any attention to his step-mother but kept his eyes fixed on the prisoner in a threatening manner as he said:

"You deserve death at my hands, and I have as much right to take the law in my own hands as you and your friends had. Tell me what you have to say, and then I may spare your life."

The man who had spoken before scowled fiercely at the prisoner, as he cried:

"That is not fair to the lads, my lord, as you promised us that we could string him up if we caught him, and we are bound to do it."

"Murderous wretches!" exclaimed Lady Craven, who feared that they would soon force her admirer into making a full confession.

"Keep your courage up, Slasher, as they can't hang you," cried Dick Craven.

"Bring out the robbing scoundrel, till we string him up," yelled a fierce voice outside the window.

And then a wild shout arose from the Boy of Donnybrook's followers outside, that caused Captain Slasher to tremble in every limb.

The young lord held up his hand, as he cried aloud:

"Hold on awhile, boys, until I hear the rascal's confession, and maybe we will show him a little mercy if he turns informer."

"No, no," cried a rough voice outside. "We don't want any informers, and he don't deserve any mercy."

"Spare my life, and I will confess everything," groaned the prisoner. "Oh, Miss Dashwood, will you not plead to Lord Craven for my life?"

Rose stepped forward at the moment and addressed the young lord in gentle tones, saying:

"This person may be guilty of attempting to take our lives, cousin, but I think you will not allow those men to take the law in their own hands, providing he will confess who his accomplices were."

The prisoner cast one timid glance at Lady Craven as he responded:

"I will confess all, Miss Dashwood. Oh, do let me have a little brandy, as I am trembling from head to foot."

Lady Craven took the hint on the moment and sprang to the side table, as she cried:

"Yes, give the poor man some brandy."

Seizing the bottle which had been used to drug the young lord, as she supposed, the cunning woman poured a large portion of it into a glass and handed it to the prisoner, as she continued:

"Drink that and it will give you courage. Fear not that the wretches will injure you any more."

The liquor was heavily drugged, but the young lad had not touched a sup of it.

Captain Slasher swallowed it eagerly, however, little caring as to the consequences.

"Now for an open confession," cried the young lord as he raised his hand to still the commotion outside.

Captain Slasher endeavored to raise himself from his knees, and had just gained his feet, when he staggered like a drunken man and fell back on the floor, groaning forth:

"I am dosed, and no mistake."

CHAPTER XVI.

A BOLD WOMAN'S DEFIANCE.

The dose which Lady Craven had given to Captain Slasher was enough to kill a man, and the wicked woman meant it to have that effect.

Her late cowardly admirer must be silenced forever at all hazards.

Dick Craven realized what his mother was about, and he trembled at the consequences.

Young Lord Craven was well aware that the contents of the bottle had been doctored by the woman before she had given it to the Boy of Donnybrook to be used on himself, and he also feared that the unfortunate man would suffer death at the hands of his fellow conspirator.

The new Boy of Donnybrook trembled, also, for his own safety, as he feared that the crime could be brought home to himself, from the fact that he had been a tool in the hands of the bold and cunning woman.

Rose Dashwood and the others present did not suspect that the brandy had been dosed, and when the victim fell over in a swoon they fancied that he had been overcome by fear and the brandy combined.

Lady Craven pretended to take the same view of the subject, as she assumed an indignant attitude on the instant, as she exclaimed:

"See, now, what your threats have done! Lord Craven, you and your fellows will have to answer the death of Captain Slasher."

A peculiar smile appeared on the face of the young lord as he responded:

"If he is dead, I know who will have to answer for it; but I trust that he isn't. Get me some hot water at once, will you, Dan, and you fellows help me to remove the captain. One of you will ride away for a doctor as fast as a horse will go."

The young lord gave some other orders in very decided tones, totally ignoring the objections of Lady Craven, who feared that they would revive her intended victim.

The insensible man was removed to a bedroom and prompt measures were at once taken for counteracting the effect of the drug.

The young lord also gave orders that Lady Craven and her son should not be permitted to go near the patient until after the arrival of the doctor.

The doctor did arrive within half an hour, and he at once set about treating the sick man as if working on a poisoning case.

Lady Craven and her son retired to a private apartment, and they were both in a very uneasy state of mind, although the wicked woman still kept up a very bold front in face of all danger.

After the arrival of the doctor Rose Dashwood hastened to seek her aunt and Dick Craven, to whom she said:

"This is a very bad affair, aunt."

"It is a bad affair, Rose," answered the wicked woman, "and the wretches who caused the trouble must suffer for it if Captain Slasher dies."

"Why, aunt, they say that he is poisoned, and by that brandy you gave him."

"Nonsense, girl. The captain was almost beaten to death when they brought him in, as you saw, and then they finished their work by threatening to hang him. The wretches must suffer for their crime."

Taking the cue from his mother, Dick Craven then said:

"What nonsense it is for them to say that the brandy killed him; and if it did, did not the poor fellow beg for it himself?"

"But they say that the brandy was poisoned," said Rose, with a shudder.

Lady Craven smiled in a mysterious manner as she responded:

"It is a very mysterious affair. In truth, there is no accounting for the freaks of a madman. Rose, will you please remember how your cousin acted to-night when you are called on for testimony?"

"I will remember, aunt," answered the young girl in very quiet tones, as she turned to leave the room.

The door had scarcely closed on the young girl when the new Boy of Donnybrook entered by a private passage, and pale was his face as he said in trembling tones:

"It is all over with him."

The wicked woman gave a deep sigh of relief, and then asked:

The woman cast a significant glance on the Boy of Donnybrook as she said to him:

"That is so much the better for you, Dan. What did the doctor say he died of?"

"From the drubbing he got, of course, ma'am."

"I will send for a magistrate and officers at once, and have the young lord and his murderous followers arrested. They will be tried for murder and they will be all hung."

Dick Craven shook his head as he responded:

"Isn't it too bold a game to play, mother? Please remember that Slasher was arrested for highway robbery, in any case."

"What of that? Had the wretches a right to beat him to death and threaten to hang him? Did you not hear that fellow say that they treated him according to the orders they had received from their young master? A bold game, indeed! Dilly-dallying will not do now. We must fight the wretch, and either have him put in the madhouse as a lunatic or have him hung as a murderer."

"That is the right game," said a hoarse voice, as a muffled stranger entered the apartment through the private door.

They all turned on the intruder on the instant, while Lady Craven exclaimed:

"You here, Cousin Burke!"

The Galway Blazer bowed to his relatives as he replied in jovial tones:

"Of course; I am always in at the death. And so Slasher has gone under."

"Yes, Captain Slasher has been beaten to death by the order of Lord Craven. Why have you ventured here, Cousin Burke?"

"Why shouldn't I be here, Lady Craven? Not hearing a word from any of you, I ran down from Dublin to see how the battle was going on."

"But you were wounded again?"

"Only a slight touch in the shoulder. Hello, Dick, has your brother been giving you another severe drubbing, old fellow?"

Dick Craven winced a little as he responded:

"We have no time to talk about trifles now, Cousin Burke. Did you hear what mother proposed?"

"Yes, and I think it is the right thing to do; as we cannot floor the fellow by bullet or steel, let us get the law on him at once."

A hasty consultation was then held, at the close of which Dick Craven was dispatched for the magistrate and police, and with orders, also, to bring back the owner of the madhouse and his men if they could be found.

The Boy of Donnybrook was instructed to keep watch over

the young lord, and to discover, if possible, all his opinions about the death of Slasher.

After a little while the Boy of Donnybrook reported to Lady Craven that the young lord remained in the room with the dead man, that he appeared to be terribly troubled over the accident, and that he had no suspicion as to the real cause of his death.

The new Boy of Donnybrook was very busy in his own behalf in the meantime.

Feeling that a crisis was at hand, the cunning coward sought to obtain the marriage certificate again with a view of assuming his old position and compelling his half-brother to play the Boy of Donnybrook as of yore.

The magistrate arrived at length, accompanied by several police officers, when Lady Craven and her son were summoned into the room where the dead man was lying.

The magistrate, the acting young lord, and the new Boy of Donnybrook were the only persons present in the dead room when Lady Craven and her son entered.

After saluting the magistrate in a very cordial manner, she turned to the dead body, as she exclaimed in dramatic tones:

"There is the work of a madman! I denounce Lord Craven there as his murderer!"

As the defiant woman thus spoke she pointed her finger at the young lord, who appeared somewhat abashed at the accusation, while the magistrate exclaimed in turn:

"Dear me, Lord Craven, this is a very serious charge. What have you to say to it?"

"I solemnly declare that I had nothing to do with the death of this man, and I now charge Lady Craven with having put him to death. If I am guilty I pray that his spirit may arise, and haunt me forever, and that I may suffer death on the gallows for the crime. Will my accuser dare to proclaim herself innocent in the same manner?"

On being thus challenged Lady Craven drew back as if appalled for the moment, but her courage soon revived, and she advanced to the bedside in a defiant manner as she cried:

"What a silly farce! Certainly, I will place my hand on the breast of the dead man, while I declare that I will not rest until I bring his murderers to justice. Mercy on me!"

As the bold woman uttered the last exclamation she withdrew her hand and sprang back in the most excited manner, while her eyes were bent on the face of the dead man.

Those eyes were suddenly opened, Captain Slasher's head was raised from the pillow, and he stretched forth his right hand to point it at the alarmed woman as he cried, in solemn tones:

"Lady Craven, you are my murderer! I was not dead, but I am a dying man, and I now declare, in the presence of the magistrate, that you gave me the brandy, knowing that it was drugged, in order to silence me forever."

The bold woman drew back in terror on being thus confronted by the man whom she supposed to be dead, and who had conspired with her for the destruction of the young lord.

Dick Craven was also fearfully alarmed, and he fell back toward the door, his limbs trembling under him as he gasped forth:

"This is awful!"

The acting Boy of Donnybrook was in a great state of terror also, as he fully believed that Captain Slasher was dead, as the doctor had so declared in his presence.

The bold woman had recovered her courage at the moment and she advanced to the bedside in a defiant manner as she exclaimed:

"This is but a trick to defeat the ends of justice. I now denounce Captain Slasher as a wretch who is turning on me in order to save his own neck. He has been accused of highway robbery by young Lord Craven here, and he has been induced to denounce me by the young wretch. Liars and perjurers, I defy you both!"

Captain Slasher glared at the woman with his staring eyes, in which death was already apparent, as he exclaimed, in thrilling tones:

"False woman, you know that you incited me to make murderous attacks on young Lord Craven. I will not denounce my other fellow conspirators, but I do denounce you. Fearing that I would confess my guilt, you gave me poison, in order to silence me forever. With my dying breath I denounce you as my murderer, you treacherous woman."

As the dying man spoke he fell back on the pillow and gasped for breath, while Lady Craven cast another defiant glance at the young lord as she cried:

"Your vile tool lies in his teeth, and I defy you to prove the charge against me. I will not remain another moment in the house where I am thus insulted."

And the defiant woman swept out of the room in a most dignified manner, her son following her on the instant, while the young lord turned to the magistrate saying, in warning tones:

"Keep silent I beg of you, sir, and let her depart in peace. Let us now see what we can do for this unfortunate man."

The doctor was again summoned, and he succeeded in restoring Captain Slasher to his senses again.

The dying man then made a full confession before the magistrate and other witnesses, in which he revealed all the plots that had been formed against young Lord Craven by the ambitious woman.

The cunning Boy of Donnybrook, who feared that he would be implicated with the others, also confessed that he had acted with the conspirators for the purpose of betraying them, and his generous half-brother bore him out in the assertion.

In the meantime, Lady Craven with her son and Jack Burke hastened away from the mansion in a carriage, no attempt being made to arrest them at the time.

Fearing pursuit, Dick Craven urged on the horses to such a speed that the carriage was overturned at a dangerous point on the road and they were all flung out into a quarry.

Lady Craven never spoke another word after that night, and she died in an insensible state two days after.

Her son received some serious injuries, and Jack Burke had his right arm broken by the fall.

As Captain Slasher died before morning, all the conspirators were either disabled or removed forever, and the acting young lord had a clean course before him until the expiration of the year.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN THE YEAR WAS UP.

After the death of Captain Slasher and Lady Craven, Dick Craven and Jack Burke fled from Ireland and they were never seen in that country afterward.

The new Boy of Donnybrook was on thorns during the days and weeks that transpired until the year was up.

In the meantime the young lord continued to manage the property and the people under him to the utmost satisfaction of all, while he treated the acting Boy of Donnybrook as if he heartily despised him.

On the eventful night in question Dan Dolan called the acting Boy of Donnybrook into the library, where Rose Dashwood was also seated.

"The year agreed upon is up to-night, and I desire to ask you if I have fulfilled my part of the compact to the letter?"

The mean fellow stared at his half-brother and then at Rose Dashwood ere he stammered forth:

"To be sure you have."

The old Boy of Donnybrook smiled as he continued:

"Do you freely admit that I have taught you how to act the manly part, not only with your deadly enemies, but with the people around you?"

"I do admit it, Dan."

"Then, you are willing, if I gave up the estate to you again, to follow the course I have laid out for you?"

"Certainly I am. Do you mean to say that you will give up the estate without making any claim on me on account of that marriage paper?"

The old Boy of Donnybrook drew the paper from his pocket and held it between his fingers as he replied, in stern tones:

"I would tear this paper up at once if I thought you would keep your word, but I do not believe you. I will keep my word, however, and you can take your old place this very night."

"But what will you do, Dan?"

"I may remain here in the neighborhood for the present to watch how you act. If you behave yourself like a true man, I will never trouble you again. If you go back to your old course, and act the part of a mean hound to every one around you, then I will step forward with this paper and other proofs that I possess, and turn you out without the least mercy. Be warned for the last time, as it is the only chance you will have."

"How much will you take, Dan, to give up that paper and settle the business for good and all?"

A scornful smile played on the face of the old Boy of Donnybrook, as he promptly responded:

"I would not take half the estate and settle with you in that way."

"But won't it be hard on you to go and live in your old way again, Dan? I will give you five thousand pounds to give up that paper and sign away all claim to the title and the estate."

"Not for fifty thousand pounds would I give up the power I hold over you. Do you not agree with me on that point, Rose?"

"You are right, dear cousin. Whether as the lord or the Boy of Donnybrook I will respect you all the same. In truth you are too generous, and there is not one man in a million in your place who would do as much for one who may never deserve it."

As the young woman spoke she placed her hand in that of the generous fellow as if to lead him to the door, when she continued:

"As you have no further business here to-night you will come with me, dear Dan. My home will be your home hereafter, and all my money is at your disposal. It is just as well to tell your half-brother now that we were married a week ago."

"Married a week!" gasped the young lord, as he stared at the beautiful girl and then at the old Boy of Donnybrook. "Is it possible, Rose, that you have become the wife of a man who has not a shilling to his name?"

"Without a shilling to his name I am prouder of him than I would be with you as a prince and heir to the throne, for he is a man, and you—"

The young woman did not finish the indignant speech, but drew her husband out of the room, leaving the cowardly young lord foaming with rage.

Five minutes after a carriage rolled away from the hall bearing the young couple, and the venomous young lord stared after them out of the window while he muttered to himself:

"Hang me if he has not tricked me after all, as Rose and her fortune are worth more than all I possess. To the mischief I'll pitch his threats and I'll go on here just as I please. I'll get that marriage certificate by hook or by crook, and then I'll defy him to his teeth."

On the following day it was announced Rose Dashwood had married the Boy of Donnybrook, and it was also rumored that young Lord Craven had made a settlement with his half-brother, which gave the latter two thousand pounds a year to live on.

The young couple started off on their wedding tour by taking the steamer for New York, as the old Boy of Donnybrook declared that he would settle in a free land, and invest all his wife's money in American real estate and securities.

When the cowardly young lord learned that his brave brother was out of the way, he commenced a life of dissipation and oppression, and his poor tenants had soon reason to deplore the absence of the old Boy of Donnybrook.

It was then rumored around that Dan Dolan had influenced his half-brother to act in a generous manner, and that the mean fellow had fallen into his old way of living on the departure of his noble brother.

Following the course of other Irish landlords, Lord Craven hastened to the continent to spend his money in dissipation in Paris and elsewhere.

Soon after arriving in Paris the young lord encountered Dick Craven and Jack Burke, and the old quarrel was renewed.

The young coward had been drinking freely on the night in question, and the stimulant gave him courage enough to accept a challenge from the Galway Blazer.

They met in a secluded spot on the following morning, and Jack Burke had his revenge at last, as he shot the young coward through the heart.

Dick Craven then laid claim to the title and the estate, when he was surprised to find that the old Boy of Donnybrook had already taken measures to counteract him.

The old Boy of Donnybrook proved beyond a doubt that he was born in wedlock, and that he was the oldest son of the old lord.

Dan Dolan continued to reside in the United States with his handsome young wife, and he was often heard to declare that one year of playing the lord was enough for him.

He became a prominent citizen in one of the flourishing cities of the West, having made arrangements with his tenants in Ireland whereby they could purchase their farms on very easy terms.

Next week's issue will contain "FIGHTING THE RED-SKINS; OR, THE BOY PIONEERS OF OLD KENTUCKY." BY AN OLD SCOUT.

CURRENT NEWS

At almost every station on a German railway the station-master has a parrot so trained that whenever a train draws up at the platform it commences calling out the name of the station distinctly, and it continues doing so while the train remains there. This has been found an excellent mode of informing the passengers where they are.

Two years ago while walking about the house H. Y. Smyth, of Lucy, La., twenty years old, ran a needle into his right foot. The doctors were unable to find it, and the pain ceased. The other day while at work on the river front he felt a sharp sting in the calf of his right leg. On investigation he found the needle protruding, and was easily able to withdraw it.

The Southern Pacific Company has contracted to sell to a syndicate headed by General Otis, proprietor of "The Los Angeles Times," and his son-in-law, Harry C. Chandler, 45,000 acres of land grant property in the Imperial Valley of California. The price to be paid for the land, it was said, would be between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000. The land will be developed by irrigation from the Colorado River and will be used for growing cantaloupes and long lint cotton.

The American baseball teams representing the Chicago White Sox of the American League and the New York Giants of the National League, arrived in Sydney, New South Wales, January 3. They are to be given a civic welcome by the Lord Mayor of Sydney on Monday. Considerable interest has been aroused in the tour in Australia and 10,000 spectators gathered on the Sydney Cricket Ground to witness the first match here which was won by the White Sox, who defeated the Giants by 5 runs to 4 amid great excitement.

The board of education of Castlewood, S. D., has had so much difficulty in retaining young women school-teachers that a public warning has been issued to the young men of the town, as follows: "We want to give fair warning that the next young man who attempts to flirt with or keep company with one of our fair schoolma'ams is apt to get into serious trouble. We admit schoolma'ams are awful nice, most enticing, and captivating and that they make ideal helpmates, but when we get a competent teacher the members of the school board like to retain her services as long as possible. We have no schoolma'ams to dispose of."

One of the most curious results of the decrease in the consumption of alcoholic drinks in England is that men of all sorts and conditions eat sweets again. In country houses after a shoot young men of five and twenty devour large slices of plum cake with their tea, and it is rare

nowadays to see a man pass the sweets at dinner. On the other hand, since women have taken to serious and often excessive cigarette smoking their taste for candies and puddings has grown notably less. Man has gone back to the nursery. Woman now lives in the smoking room.

A grocer of Granite City, Ill., who had been boasting of the ancient stuff he foisted off on the guileless folk of "Hungry Hollow," called on Mrs. Allon Kilfosky to collect a bill. She invited him to dine. The menu consisted of steak, scrambled eggs and roasting ears. It was one of his own steaks, but he had not brought with him a diagram of how to cut it. He managed to eat a mouthful and was then introduced to some of his choicest "tanned" and antique eggs. After one taste he said he would rather take a licking than any more egg; so he was allowed to proceed to the corn, which a mule would have had a hard time masticating. He promised when let off that everything Mrs. Kilfosky got hereafter will be fresh.

Will McClure, a jeweler of Leitchfield, Ky., while drilling for a well on the property of Jim McClure in the suburbs of Leitchfield, suddenly had the bottom fall out of the well into a circular subterranean cavern. The well was dug to a depth of 28 feet, when the bottom fell into the cavern, which is about forty by sixty feet long and from eight to ten feet high. There are two passages leading from this chamber, one running east and one west. A part of the eastern passage has been explored to a distance of 150 yards, while in this passage there are two divergent passages unexplored. In the western passage, which takes a declivity of about thirty feet, a large chamber is reached 30 by 150 feet long, and ten or twelve feet high. There are two unexplored passages leading out of the western passage. The walls and top of the caverns are covered with white limestone formation.

There is every probability that the English Channel next summer will be the scene of one of the greatest international aviation contests yet seen. The French aeroplane constructors met this week at the Grand Palais, where the aviation salon was being held, to discuss the locality in which to hold the proposed great hydroaeroplane contest which the Aero Club de France has decided to arrange for next summer. Strong opposition was offered to the proposal that the event should take the form of a race along the coast of France from Dunkirk to Biarritz, and it was decided, with a view of securing British co-operation, to endeavor to arrange for the event to take place in the Channel. It was suggested that inquiries should be made on both sides of the Channel to ascertain the most suitable English and French towns at which landing places for the various stages of the race could be provided.

TATTERS

OR,

THE BOY WHO OWNED THE HOTEL

BY J. P. RICHARDS.

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XVI (Continued).

Meanwhile he found plenty to do in waiting upon his grandfather, who seemed to be very weak, so much so that he declared he was not able to get up.

Tatters went down into the kitchen and had the old colored woman, whom he found cooking there, prepare a good breakfast for the old gentleman, which he took up to his room and served to him in bed.

His hotel experience told Tatters just what to do, and just how to do it.

Mr. Knight declared that he was a better valet in every way than Francois and he drew the boy close to him and kissed him again before Tatters left the room.

"I'm glad I've found you, Reginald," he said. "How much I have missed in not knowing you before! But my whole life has been a failure—that's the way it goes in this world."

Tatters did not say much in answer to his, for he did not know what to say, but he left the room more firmly determined than ever to get the best of Slocum Sly, who seemed to have no suspicion of what was passing in his mind when they met at the table in the breakfast room.

"That fellow Jake made an idiot of himself last night," Sly said, after a few general remarks. "He must have dropped asleep and dreamed that some one came over the wall. Didn't you hear him firing his revolver and yelling burglars? It was just before I came into your room. That's what I meant by what I said to you. Do you know, I actually thought that you had been trying to escape?"

"I sleep so sound that I scarcely ever hear anything," replied Tatters, "but I'm pretty sure to wake up in a hurry if any one comes into my room as you did last night."

"I think I'll have to shake Jake," said Sly. "Now, young fellow, we must get to work right away. I shall see your grandfather about the will as soon as breakfast is over. If I can prevail upon him to sign it to-day, why, we can finish the job right up. At ten o'clock the doctor comes. I have sent for him because it will be a good job for him to see your grandfather before—well, you know what."

"Before you begin to dose him, I suppose you mean," said Tatters. "Speak right out, Mr. Sly. You needn't be afraid of me."

"By Jove, you're a brick!" chuckled the villain. "I never worked with a fellow who entered into the scheme the way you do."

"That's all right. If I undertake to do anything, I like to do it. Am I expected to give the dose, or do you attend to that end of the business yourself?"

"Never you mind about that; leave it all to me. Now, I'm going upstairs to have a talk with the old gent about the will, so you had better keep out of the way."

"Can I walk out in the grounds?"

"Yes, if you want to, but don't try to pass the gate, or there'll be trouble sure."

Tatters went out, and, meeting Jake, went right up to him and bade the fellow good-morning.

The answer was a surly growl, and Tatters walked on, Jake following him all over the grounds without saying a word.

"He suspects me," thought Tatters, as he re-entered the house. "Sly has tried to talk him out of it, but he knows blamed well that it was I who tumbled him over last night."

Just then a carriage came rattling up to the door, and a gentleman in black, carrying a little medicine case, jumped out.

This, of course, was the doctor. The colored man who was in attendance downstairs admitted him, and showed him up to Mr. Knight's room.

Tatters closed the door behind him.

"They mean to poison grandfather right now," he thought. "I must keep my eyes peeled."

He slipped noiselessly into his own room and took up his position just inside the dividing door, which stood partly open.

Through the crack he could see and hear all that was going on in the room beyond.

CHAPTER XVII.

TATTERS SEES HIMSELF THE OWNER OF THE HOTEL.

Tatters did not learn anything by listening behind the door.

Dr. Stonebridge—that was the name under which Sly introduced the man of medicine—examined Mr. Knight, and, telling him that he was only a little weak on account of his long journey, left medicine and went downstairs with Sly.

Tatters immediately slipped into the room.

"Did you want anything, grandfather?" he asked. "Shan't I help you to dress?"

"No, but I am glad you have come, Reginald," replied Mr. Knight. "Do you suppose we shall be left alone here for a few minutes, my boy? I've got something I want to say to you—something very particular indeed."

"I'm sure I can't tell. Mr. Sly is all over the house, sir."

"You don't trust Mr. Sly, Reginald?" said the old man.

"Do you, grandfather?"

"I have trusted him for years, but——"

"But you don't trust him now?"

"Lock the door, Reginald. He wants me to make my will, and I have promised to do it, but before I do so, I want to say—confound the fellow! Here he is again!"

Sly's step was heard outside before Tatters could reach the door.

"Let him in," whispered Mr. Knight. "We will talk some other time."

Sly came in smiling and showing his teeth, as he usually did.

(To be continued).

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

The yacht under construction at the Herreshoff yards, Bristol, R. I., by a syndicate of New York men as a candidate for the defense of the America's Cup will probably have a wooden mainmast of the "stave" variety. The new boat is not as large as the defenders Columbia and Reliance, which were equipped with steel masts. The attention of the builders at present is devoted principally to the completion of the bronze keel plate, which was cast recently.

At the new works of the United Verde Copper Company, Jerome, Ariz., is building a steel smokestack that is said by the Engineering and Mining Journal to be the tallest in the world. The chimney is 30 feet in diameter inside the brick lining, 30 feet 9½ inches inside of the steel shell, and 400 feet 1 inch from top of foundation to top of steel. The unusual size of this structure, the connections for three flues, and the protection of the steel plate from the flue gases, caused several interesting problems in the design. The diameter and height of the chimney were determined by the draught calculations; the diameter and height of bell were made one-eighth of the height of the chimney, or fifty feet. The brick lining was supported on the legs of circular angles riveted to the inside of shell and spaced fifteen feet apart. By this method, the bearing capacity of the brick is not exceeded and any section can be replaced without affecting the others.

Emperor William has been sawing and splitting wood for some days with the day laborers on the imperial estate surrounding Sans Souci Palace. His physicians had advised him to do manual labor, and every forenoon he spends on the grounds working zealously with one or another of the laborers. An experienced woodsman sets before him every morning a big pile of logs in a secluded part of the grounds and the Emperor works four or five hours, three hours before luncheon and one or two afterward. Sometimes he invites the woodsman to help him with a big double saw. His Majesty is said to take great pride in piling the fuel in neat heaps, which he then presents to the woodsman for use in his home. Those who have seen him at work say the Emperor wields the saw and axe with characteristic energy, while the Empress often looks on and jokingly checks the work he accomplishes. Aides-de-camp are occasionally called upon to assist in the work.

The town of Pretty Prairie, Reno County, Kans., with 354 inhabitants, has an automobile to every family. It averages up that way. There are sixty-six automobiles in the town, and the same number of families. Pretty Prairie is a prosperous rural village in the centre of a rich farming country. It is by no means unusual for farmers whose acreage is in the suburbs, but who live in the town, to own two or three cars, a big touring car for the wife, a run-

about for himself and an old car for hauling to and from the farm. There are 1,223 automobiles in Reno County. Of these 425 are owned by farmers residing outside of incorporated towns, besides many others owned by farmers who live in the towns. In Langdon, with 184 inhabitants, there are fifteen cars. Plevna, with 165 people, has twelve automobiles. In Sylvia there is a car to every three families, and the same ratio in Plevna. Hutchinson has 499 automobiles, averaging one to each seven families. This is not including 110 more owned by farmers on the rural routes accredited to Hutchinson.

The Poison Valley of Java receives its name from the deadly atmosphere which surrounds it. It is loaded with carbonic acid gas, and, although not at once fatal to human beings, proves so to either dogs or fowls. The valley has seldom been explored much beyond the borders, as from there it is seen that the surface of the ground is strewn with the bones of tigers, deer, all kinds of birds, and also human beings. There is also a valley known by a similar name in the county of Inyo, California, between the Paramint mountains and the Armargosa range. It is forty miles long by about eight miles broad, and its bed in the deepest part lies one hundred and fifty feet below the level of the sea. Every part of the valley is deadly. Its topography and climate have never been accurately observed, for human beings cannot live long enough in its atmosphere to ascertain the needed facts. In the coolest and highest part the thermometer often stands at 125 degrees, so that the deadly quality of the air is perhaps only its intense heat. Still, it is surmised, as the valley is of volcanic formation, that deadly gases may be emitted from cracks in the rocks.

The seven wonders of Corea are: (1) The marvelous Mineral Spring of Kiushanto, one dip in which is a sovereign cure for all the ills that human flesh is heir to. (2) The double springs which, though far apart, have a strange, mysterious affinity. According to Corean belief, there is a connection underground, through which water ebbs and flows like the waters of the ocean, in such a way that only one spring is full at a time. The water possesses a wonderful sweetening power, so that whatever is cooked therein becomes good and palatable. (3) The Cold Wind Cavern, whence comes a never ceasing wind so piercing that nothing can withstand it and so powerful that the strongest man cannot face it. (4) The indestructible Pine Forest, the trees of which grow up again as fast as they are cut down. (5) The Floating Stone, a massive block that has no visible support, but, like Mahomet's coffin, remains suspended. (6) The Warm Stone, situated on the top of a hill and said to have the peculiarity of spreading warmth and heat all round it. (7) A drop of the Sweat of Buddha, for thirty paces round which no flower or vegetation will grow, nor will birds or other living things pass over it.

WORKING FOR WILL

— OR —

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT STAY DOWN

By WILLIAM WADE.

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER IX (Continued).

Just then the sound of wheels was heard on the drive above, and the boys hurried upstairs expecting to see Mr. Eagleton's coachman and the livery team, but instead, there was Mr. Ransley and Lawyer Main, in the latter's buggy.

"Hello, Will!" cried the genial manager, jumping out of the buggy, "thought I would come down and see how you are getting along."

"It's all done, sir. I'm ready," replied Will, promptly; and he whispered to Harry:

"Not a word about old Middleton. If we can only keep out of the cellar we are safe."

"Well, you are prompt, boy," said Mr. Ransley.

"Will is always prompt," said Lawyer Main, hitching the horse.

"I want to say," added Will, "that I haven't had time to verify my figures yet, but I can show you just what ought to be done to carry out your ideas, and give you a general notion of the cost."

"Give us the cost, first," said Mr. Ransley.

"I'm afraid I shall frighten you, sir."

"Try it on! Try it on, boy."

"Four thousand dollars," said Will, quietly.

"Phew! Pretty steep!" cried Mr. Ransley. "If I hadn't lost that grizzly bear I'd say yes, offhand, but it will cost me two thousand dollars to replace him, and——"

"Well, you don't have to do that!" cried Harry, who never could keep his mouth shut. "Will caught the bear, and he is in the barn now."

"What?" roared Mr. Ransley. "Say that again!"

"Why, we did get the bear, sir," laughed Will, "and he is actually in the barn at the present moment, but that has nothing to do with this job."

"It's got everything to do with it!" cried the circus manager. "Say no more, Will Long, if you will accept the contract to put this house in thorough repair, according to the plan I sketched out for you, for \$4,000, why, the job is yours!"

CHAPTER X.

WILL FINDS A NEW FRIEND.

"Done," said Will. "I accept that offer."

"You speak promptly! my boy. I don't want you to get stuck. I hope you know what you are about," the circus manager said.

"Will always knows what he is about," said Mr. Main. "You needn't have any fears on that score."

"I think I am all right, sir," added Will. "Of course, I don't pretend to have made this estimate myself. It has

been done under my instructions, however, and by a man who thoroughly understands his business."

"I guess I know who it is," laughed Mr. Main. "Old man Middleton."

"It is no secret," said Will. "Mr. Middleton made the estimate. He will be my foreman if I do the job."

"He is an A-1 mechanic if you can only keep him sober," said the lawyer.

"That's the hardest part of the contract," sighed Will, "but I am not going to depend on him entirely. I shall bring a man out from Boston, who will be equally good."

"All right," said Mr. Ransley. "Pitch in and see what you can do. Want any money?"

"No, sir."

"But you must need some. Here's two hundred dollars for capturing the bear."

"No, no! I won't take it," said Will. "All I did was to shut the barn door on him," and he went on to tell the whole story, which greatly interested Mr. Ransley, of course.

Then they went out and had a look at the bear through the window.

"I'll get right back and send the keeper down with the bear van to get him," said the circus manager. "Suppose you boys will stay here till he comes?"

"Certainly," replied Will, "but don't you want to go over the house and let me explain what I intend to do?"

"Some other time. Can't rest till the bear is safe under our tent," replied Mr. Ransley. "Come on, Main."

Then they got into the buggy and drove away.

Ten minutes later, Mr. Eagleton's coachman brought back the carryall, but the boys had to wait nearly an hour for the bear van.

When it came the keeper made short work of the business.

He was armed with a big club and he walked right into the barn, put a collar and a muzzle on the bear, led him out, and made him climb into the van.

The grizzly did a little growling, and got the club over his head twice, but on the whole there was no trouble, and the boys had the satisfaction of seeing the van rattle away with the bear inside.

"Now for our beast, Hal," said Will, "but first of all, I am going to stave in that whiskey cask."

"Turn the spigot, that's all that's necessary," said Harry, and that is what the boys did when they got down the cellar.

While the whiskey was running out on the ground, they dragged the old drunkard upstairs and with some difficulty got him into the carryall, setting him on the floor, so that his head rested on the seat.

In this way they were able to drive him home, and then they had another job carrying him upstairs to the room where he lived alone, his wife having died years before.

Here they tumbled him on the bed, and then returned the team to the livery stable, after which Harry went home, while Will went down to Blatchford's lumber yard at the wharf near the railroad bridge.

Mr. Blatchford was in the office writing in his books.

"Well, Will, what did you do?" he asked.

"Got the job, sir," replied Will.

(To be continued).

NEWS PARAGRAPHS

Maitress, the largest of the Chaussey group, lying midway between Jersey and Granville, has been let, together with a military fort, for \$250 a year. The French Government originally offered the fort alone at an annual rental of \$30. The new lessee of the island is the well known French caricaturist Daniel Thouroude.

Assays made upon samples of ore taken from the farm of John Stienbeck near Poplar, in Douglas county, Wis., have led the owner to believe that he has a gold and silver mine on his property. The values shown in the first samples are small, but Stienbeck says he has located a rocky ledge within six feet of the surface which he believes is rich in minerals.

The Panama-Pacific Exposition is to be held in a plot of ground containing 625 acres in the "Harbor View" section of San Francisco, overlooking San Francisco Bay and the "Golden Gate" entrance from the Pacific. This ground includes part of the United States military reservation—the Presidio on one end and Fort Mason on the other.

Just \$797,900 was expended last year in construction by the seven naval powers of the world, the United States standing second in the list with appropriations of \$140,800,643. Great Britain spent \$235,713,489, while Germany was not far behind the United States, with an expenditure of \$111,270,025. Japan took last place, having spent only \$48,105,151. Great Britain held her place as the first naval power with 2,591,291 tonnage, allowing for the completion of the vessels now building. Germany ranks second, with a tonnage of 1,228,208; the United States is third, with 921,844 tons; France fourth, with 876,155 tons, and Japan fifth, with 702,099 tons.

Word has just reached Ottawa of a fierce battle with a pack of wolves, in which Peter Nigosh, an Indian trapper, was killed on the Lake of the Wood country. The encounter occurred near Warroad, on the Canadian Northern Railway. Nigosh was returning from his traps, a few miles up the lake, when he was suddenly attacked by the wolves. He had not time to scale the nearest tree, and had only a long hunting knife to protect him. The pack closed in on him, and one after another he slew with his weapon until nine were dead at his feet. Then, exhausted from his efforts, he fell an easy prey to the survivors of the pack. Relatives began a search, and they discovered the spot where the battle took place, but the only trace of the Indian was his bones, stripped clean of flesh. The nine dead wolves were partly devoured.

A race riot between Japanese fruit pickers and unemployed Americans is imminent at Rialto, an orange growing centre near San Bernardino, Cal. Two hundred un-

employed Americans approached the Rialto fruit growers recently and demanded that the Japanese be discharged and that work be given to them. With the fruit growers' refusal came threats of violence from the whites. Many of the growers armed their Japanese employees and placed guards around their groves. A riot call was received and automobiles filled with armed deputies were rushed to the scene. A telephone message received from the deputies upon their arrival at Rialto was to the effect that the leaders threatened to attack the Japanese and drive them from the ranches unless the growers discharged the Japanese and hired the Americans. Four leaders of the American rioters were placed under arrest.

The Chinese are inveterate gamblers, and never lose an opportunity to bet, no matter how trivial the cause may be. One of their greatest institutions is cricket-fighting, the crickets being caught, fed and trained as carefully as a blooded horse. There is a fixed diet for them, part of their food consisting of honey and boiled chestnuts. If they get sick, they are fed with mosquitoes. Prior to fighting, their weight is ascertained and duly recorded, there being a fixed regulation as to their size and weight. On the door of the house in which the fight is to take place, the record of each cricket is pasted up and the owner of the winner gets ten per cent. of all the bets. The cricket pit is a low tub placed on the table, and, after weighing, the combatants are put in it and tickled with straws until they rush at each other with loud chirrup and fight until one of them is killed. Good fighting crickets are very valuable and are often sold for large sums.

Arrowheads and beads and other trinkets which the Indians bury with their dead are in the possession of Frank Nelson, who found them along with three skeletons on his farm, between East Hampton and Amagansett, New York. The skeletons are undoubtedly those of Indians who are believed to have been buried more than 250 years ago. The bodies were found four feet under ground, with their heads pointing to the east. The arrowheads and trinkets were at the side of each body. The skeletons were apparently those of men of big frame. That the three were found together is believed to indicate that they were slain in battle. Persons familiar with the history of East Hampton say they believe the bodies were buried between 250 and 300 years ago. The history of the village dates back to 250 years ago. At that time the principal burial place of the Indians in that part of Long Island was at Montauk Point. There is no record of an Indian burial place at East Hampton. For this reason it is assumed the bodies must have been buried there before the Indians began pilgrimages with their dead to Montauk Point. Nielson came across the skeletons while he was digging a cellar for a chicken house. The bones of the jaw and the teeth are very well preserved.

INTERESTING TOPICS

CRABS ROOT UP SAPLINGS.

Some interesting facts respecting the destructiveness of certain species of crabs in Grand Cayman, an island in the British West Indies, appear in a bulletin just issued from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and written by T. M. S. English, who has lived there three years.

The edible crab, he says, grows to a considerable size, an old male being sometimes six inches across and having its larger claw no less than fourteen inches in length from its junction with the body to the end of its "jaws." The female has smaller claws, but apparently they are most destructive.

They are great burrowers and cannibals too. In places where they abound nothing is safe from them. They will take into their holes things for which they cannot conceivably find a use—a knife, for instance or a pocket compass. They will eat the eggs from under a sitting hen, if not the hen herself, as readily as the leaves of seedling cocoanut trees, and of these from 6 to 10 per cent. have to be replaced if they are planted in newly cleared ground before the crabs have been very thoroughly thinned out. They are responsible for frequent patches of bare soil in the "bush," which become covered with vegetation when the crabs are gone.

During the drier months of the early part of the year they go underground to change their shells and add to their destructiveness by barricading the mouths of their holes with masses of sticks and rubbish like jackdaws' nests, nipping off or rooting up saplings as much as three-quarters of an inch in diameter for the purpose.

SALTING A MINE.

Salting mines is a practice that is not so common as it was twenty years ago, but it has been done once or twice in Mexico and Alaska with great success even in recent years. The Engineering and Mining Journal tells of one such instance, the scene of which was near Juneau, Alaska. Three partners owned a ledge, but discovered that the ore was of too low grade to make it profitable to work. They, however, effected a sale on a basis of a total price of \$450,000, of which 25 per cent. was to be paid if an assay of the ore turned out well.

Two different corps of engineers were sent to sample the ore. The owners got into their good graces and were permitted to assist at the sampling, during which they salted the ore till it assayed \$4 a ton. A third engineer was sent out. He would have nothing to do with the owners and required them to leave the island on which the mine was situated. He took two or three tons of samples in sacks to Juneau, where it lay for several days on the wharf awaiting a San Francisco boat and in charge of a watchman night and day.

While the samples were on the wharf three fellows, dressed as travellers or tourists, with their little dude canes, strolling around, would come to these sacks, ask the watchman a lot of foolish questions about them, and

all the time they would be stabbing and punching the sacks with their dude canes, which were loaded with chloride of gold. This was repeated several times, each time changing the disguise. It was so well done that the third engineer's report was satisfactory and the schemers received their first payment, all that they expected.

About fifteen years ago a property on Signal Hill, Cripple Creek, within less than a mile from the town, was salted by using chloride of gold in a shotgun, shooting it into the breasts of the drifts and bottom of the shaft. It was so well done that the swindlers received the first payment, amounting to \$10,000.

SWISS FOREST PROTECTION.

Because of the limited area of Switzerland and the fact that it is so mountainous, leaving only a small portion of the territory available for cultivation, the conservation of the natural resources of the country is important. To this end both the Federal and cantonal governments give aid and encouragement in the way of subsidies, especially for the protection and conservation of the forests, which cover about one-fourth of the total area of the territory comprising the confederation.

In addition to the importance of the maintenance of forests as a commercial and economic question is the protection of life and property in the villages and communities of the mountainous districts from avalanches. The pines, firs, larches, and other trees that grow in the higher altitudes and sterile soil of the mountains offer the only protection against avalanches and landslides, which not infrequently destroy whole villages and do great damage to communities in their devastating course. Only small tracts of the forests in Switzerland are denuded at one time, writes Consul General R. E. Mansfield, Zurich. The portions from which the timber is cut are immediately replanted, and by this process of removal and replanting the forest area is always covered with growing trees.

In 1814 the total forest area of Switzerland was 2,091,000 acres, representing slightly more than 20 per cent. of the total area of the country. In 1911 the forest acreage was 2,258,000, equal to nearly 22 per cent. of the area of the country, or a gain of 167,000 acres.

Instead of being an expense, the forest areas of Switzerland are a source of profit to the Government. The method of cutting the timber is usually by contract with individuals or corporations at a fixed price per acre for the timber, which includes clearing the land and replanting the trees.

Of the total 2,258,000 acres of forest, covering nearly one-quarter of the Confederation's territory, 1,679,000 acres are under Government control and protection. The increase noted in the forest area of Switzerland in recent years is due to the protective policy of the Federal and cantonal Governments in the conservation of the existing forests and the forestation of additional territory.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

"HOW THE WORLD IS CHEATED."

According to reports from Halle, Germany, the good citizens of a neighboring hamlet are still indignant over an incident which occurred there recently. The entire village and surrounding country were on the tiptoe of expectation to see the sensational drama "How the World Is Cheated," which huge yellow posters had announced would be given by a theatrical troupe in a local temple of Thespis, a large hall over the village inn.

In due course the troupe arrived and the actors were especially pleased to find the advance sale of tickets, at a quarter each, insured a full house and a snug sum in the box office. The evening of the performance saw the house packed. The audience waited patiently for nearly an hour and then the males present lost patience and commenced to stamp and whistle.

After a long delay the scared looking proprietor of the hall appeared and announced that the troupe had vanished with the box office receipts into the darkness and night, leaving behind them a placard on which was written "This is How the World Is Cheated."

COVERS 186 MILES A SECOND.

A great deal of controversy has been waged about the structure and composition of the great spiral nebula in Andromeda, the most beautiful and striking apparition which celestial photography has revealed. It was suggested some two years ago that the nebula was not gaseous, but was a universe of stars external to our own galaxy. This inference, made by V. M. Slipher, was based on the appearance of certain Fraunhofer lines in its light spectrum which were inconsistent with the idea that it was a gaseous nebula.

The same observer by examining the shift of the lines in its spectrum—from four good plates obtained some months ago—has calculated the speed at which the nebula is moving. He obtains the startling result that the nebula is approaching us at the rate of 186 miles a second.

It is a little difficult to credit that such a vast object as this, which at the least estimate must be hundreds of millions of miles in diameter, could be moving at so great a speed. Moreover no movement sideways of the nebula has ever been detected, and therefore, since it does not seem probable that it can be coming toward our telescopes directly "head on," it must either be at a very great distance or else there is something wrong in the observations.

ARIZONA'S OSTRICH INDUSTRY.

There are now about 6,000 birds on the ostrich farms of Arizona, and the industry is said to be but in its infancy. The present status of the industry is marked by a departure from the custom first established of raising as many birds as possible, and the ostrich grower is scientifically improving the quality of his stock and of the feathers, that are becoming more and more valuable.

South African experts and experts from the United States bureaus who have visited this section are convinced that the climate, food and market conditions are desirable for the profitable continuation of the industry, and they predict that the ostrich growers of the Salt River Valley have an opportunity to exceed all records in this line.

There are fifteen ostrich ranches in the valley, and the industry has become a leader. W. S. Pickerell of the Arizona Ostrich Company has made a scientific study of the methods of incubating and treating eggs up to the hatching stage. Growers have been unsuccessful in this feature of the industry and the rate of mortality has been exceptionally high. Mr. Pickerell says that out of 120 eggs hatched he saved and raised 112 birds. Another time he hatched 275 eggs and saved 232 birds.

J. G. Spangler of Mess, one of the best-known bankers and ranchmen of the State, was elected President of the Arizona Ostrich Growers' Association; W. S. Pickerell of the Arizona Ostrich Company, the pioneer breeder of ostriches in Arizona, was elected vice-president, and C. B. Laird secretary and treasurer.

AMERICAN BALLOONIST BATTLES WITH TIGER.

A thrilling adventure of American balloonists with a tiger has just been reported at St. Petersburg. Accompanied by his fiancée Mr. Fobster, an American airman well known in Siberia, about a fortnight ago made an ascent from Vladivostok with the intention of reaching Khabarovsk, a town on the Amur.

The balloon was a small one, unequipped with a ripping valve for easy descents. The weather, however, proved unfavorable, and the airman resolved to land.

He accomplished the descent, and as the balloon neared the ground jumped out, holding the trail rope, intending to drag the balloon down to earth and assist the girl to descend. As soon as he had jumped, however, he noticed a Siberian tiger, which jumped over the American, who had thrown himself on the ground, sprang at the car and remained hanging while the balloon reascended.

Mr. Fobster had no weapon with him but a big knife, and it was out of the question to urge the girl to jump out, since she would have been killed on the spot. Shouting to the girl to keep quiet he grasped the end of the guide rope and ran to the river, 200 or 300 yards away.

Meanwhile the tiger was making desperate efforts to climb into the car, and the airman, reaching the river, which happily was not very deep at that point, jumped in and then shouted to his fiancée to jump down. The girl hesitated, but at that very moment the tiger, struggling for life, made a last desperate effort and climbed into the car. Then the girl took the leap.

Mr. Fobster then let the guide rope go and swam to the rescue of his companion. At the same time the balloon, lightened of the weight of the girl, rose quickly up with the amazed tiger in it. The couple were rescued by peasants.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 11, 1914.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

A defi has been issued to athletic womankind the world over by seventeen-year-old Isabelle Lengel of Scranton, Pa., who can lift six times her own weight without harness. Miss Lengel weighs 117 pounds, and she can lift 675 pounds. She is a pretty brunette, and her father has offered to back her in a weight-lifting contest against any girl of her age in the world. She got her start in the high school gymnasium, and takes her daily exercise with dumb-bells weighing twenty-five pounds each.

At the initiation of federation the total population of Australia was 3,764,339. On June 30, 1913, it had reached 4,801,946, or a gain of 1,036,607 in twelve and a half years. The rate of increase represented a gain of two per cent. per annum, and, if maintained, will mean that the population will double itself in about thirty-six years. The rates of increase per annum of England and Wales are 1 per cent.; Germany, 1½ per cent.; United States, 1¼ per cent.; and Canada, 2¾ per cent. Of Australia's population eighty-three per cent. are Australian born.

Many cities of France have begun to experience a miniature famine, owing to the virtual stoppage of traffic, caused by the heavy snowfall. At Perpignan, which is completely snowbound, supplies of bread and fuel have fallen very low, most of the provision merchants having sold out their stocks. The pinch is felt also at Nimes, Pau, Toulouse, and Toulon. Railway communication between Paris and Bordeaux has come to a standstill, trains being stalled on opposite sides of Beziers, in the Department of Herault. Branch lines are blocked all over France, and at Cerbere, on the Spanish frontier, where the snow has reached a depth of forty inches, 1,200 travelers are held up, and it is very difficult to find food and accommodations for them. Navigation of canals and rivers has virtually ceased, owing to the thick ice, as in some parts of the country the temperature has fallen to zero.

One of the strangest places in the United States is the little city of Hazardville, Connecticut, for in this small place nearly every person one meets is a cripple. Men without arms and legs, or with badly scarred faces, meet

you at every turn, until the visitor begins to feel that he is visiting the grounds of some great hospital after a great battle. But the secret of this strange condition of the population is that near Hazardville are the greatest powder mills in the world, and all the cripples are those who have been maimed by explosions. During the day the able-bodied citizens are at work in the mills, and so only the cripples are to be seen in the streets. Strange to say, these poor creatures seem very cheerful and happy, and often one comes upon a group of ten or twenty laughing and talking, as light-hearted and contented as if they possessed all their limbs. One peculiarity will, however, strike the newcomer at once, and that is the extreme care with which they move about, as if the force of habit acquired in the powder mill still clings to them, even after they had been forced to leave their work.

After robbing the passengers in one of the cars of several hundred dollars and wounding a deputy sheriff in a pistol duel the other night, a lone bandit jumped from a Western & Atlantic train bound for Chattanooga and escaped. The authorities arrested a man later said to answer the description of the robber. This train runs between Chattanooga and Atlanta, and most of the passengers were residents of Chattanooga and intermediate towns. As the train passed through Vinings shortly after 7 o'clock a man entered the chair car, drew a pistol and began to collect valuables from the passengers. He had robbed more than a score, when C. C. Heard, an Atlanta deputy sheriff, who was returning from Rome, Ga., opened fire upon him. Half a dozen shots were exchanged, Heard being wounded slightly by a bullet which passed through his cheek. The bandit then swung from the train as it slowed down here and disappeared. The robber did not enter the express or mail cars. One passenger reported that he had given up \$200.

Yachting experts in London cannot believe the truth of the report that the America Cup challenger will have a centreboard. At Southampton, where the yacht is being built, the idea is laughed at as incredible. The World correspondent there reports that it emanated from the Times and the Daily Telegraph, which, presumably, are not publishing such statements lightly. The World correspondent at Glasgow says the experts unanimously favor a keel. Former Lord-Provost Bell, owner of the Thistle, told The World that when he challenged with the Thistle she had a keel, but she was beaten by the Volunteer because the latter was a better boat; he believes in keels. Alfred Myne, the eminent naval architect of the Northern Yacht Club and the Royal Clyde Yacht Club, said the New York Club rules encourage keels and give no inducements for centreboards. Mr. Barnett, designer of the famous yacht building firm of G. L. Watson, who designed four challengers, said that in the case of extreme boats like the challenger, the keel was the only thing. He had heard rumors that the defender might be a centreboard, but considered it impossible. He recalled after the Valkyrie II. raced the Vigilant, which had a centreboard, Watson predicted that all future defenders would be keeled.

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

ROMAN WOMEN BAR TANGO.

A majority of the women of the Roman aristocracy have decided to conform to the instructions issued by Cardinal Bastilio Pompili, Vicar-General of Rome, and banish the tango from their salons and otherwise discourage the dance.

Cardinal Pompili, representing Pope Pius, in a pastoral letter, denounced the tango and declared that it must be absolutely prohibited in the seat of the Roman Pontiff.

The Archbishop of Florence, the Most Rev. A. Mis-trangelo, in a letter to the local diocesan newspaper, joins Cardinal Pompili in his condemnation of the tango. The Archbishop inclosed in the letter a subscription for the printing of a pamphlet to fight the dance.

LINED WITH \$51,000.

The Ward liner Monterey brought to port Louis Vigil, a Mexican jeweller, who decided several months ago that the \$51,000 in gold which he possessed was better off in New York City unguarded than in the capital of the turbulent republic in which he lived.

He brought the gold with him in a sort of mackinaw coat, which was both especially and secretly made for him by a tailor in Mexico City. Vigil wore the coat aboard the steamship, and it was on his back when the Monterey docked.

When his baggage was examined by the customs officials the man in the gold armor called a taxicab and hastened for a safe deposit vault which had been recommended to him in Vera Cruz.

BIRD CARRYING BELL 30 YEARS IS SEEN AGAIN.

A "belled buzzard," the jingle of whose bell was recently heard in north Georgia, and which is said to have been seen by a number of persons, is believed to be the same bird that was captured by three Tennesseans near Russellville, in Hawkins County, in 1883. These men wired a bell to the buzzard's neck. For several years after 1883 the jingle of the bell was heard around Russellville, but later the buzzard migrated, returning to its old haunts occasionally, however. It is several years since the tinkle of its bell has been heard in Tennessee, and the residents of the Russellville community are convinced that the "belled" buzzard seen in Georgia is the Tennessee product, and that it has been one of the active members of its species all these years. If this is the same buzzard, it may now be considered upwards of 40 years old, for it was grown when captured.

QUEER HAPPENINGS.

Jewelry worth \$100 and supper for family to eat on returning from theatre burglars' haul in home of Herbert Will, Mamaroneck.

Everett Masterson, of Pawling, scuffling with boy, lost

control of his auto. Machine hit tree. Masterson's ankle broken; boy's nose broken.

Because she killed 1,365 caterpillars in a single season, Miss Ernie Burton, of Brewster, wins prize.

Mrs. Mary Poole, blind organ grinder, sitting in rain in Yonkers, arrested for getting wet. Released.

Striker arrested recently in demonstration against tow-boat strikebreaker when he pulled a revolver was released. Revolver was of glass.

Sketch of a horse's feet and order for shoes, came by mail from Washington to Henry Meyers, an Eltingville, S. I., blacksmith.

Tramp wrapped himself in sheet, used for moving picture screen, and went to sleep in Brewster church, captured by janitor.

Flock of fifty chickens at Mahopac, N. Y., entered empty grain car on side track. Brakeman closed the door and train went on its way.

One-armed beggar who whipped Newark policeman sent to the penitentiary for a year by Justice Hahn.

Patrolman John Dornberg, tallest policeman in Jersey City, married. He is 6 feet 6¾ inches tall and drum major of the police band.

Forty-seven deer that have run wild over Nyack estate have been captured and will be sent to Massachusetts. Edmund Kelly turned six out seven years ago and forty have been raised.

Her husband having taken only three baths in eight years, Mrs. Liddy Moore, Paterson, mentioned it as one of his cruelties.

From a great uncle, whose name he had never heard, George Abrash, Paterson, inherited \$27,000.

On Morgan's Beach, New Brunswick, fishermen find baby whale, weight 500 pounds, stranded.

Mrs. Henry Pettit, celebrating her ninety-ninth birthday at Rockville Centre, L. I., says she recalls when the Merikoke Indians camped there.

John Noon, having signed the pledge before Recorder Nott, East Orange, celebrated event by getting uproariously intoxicated. Arrested again.

Mrs. Annie Rose, Hoboken, forty, sues Dr. Henry Rosinoff for \$500, alleging his dental work makes her look like sixty.

The Rev. Alexander Corson asks congregation of First Methodist Church, Millville, to criticise. "Your sermons too long," one wrote.

Burglars ransack Whitestone Yacht Club with steward and family asleep. Steal graphophone, opera records, seven-day clock, etc.

Alfred W. Meldon, lawyer, No. 24 Ackroyd avenue, Jamaica, is considering offer of a phonograph concern to "can" songs which his dog, Caruso, sings to accompaniment of piano.

Michael Martin, Rockland Lake, declined anaesthetic and watched doctors amputate four fingers at Nyack Hospital.

DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.



A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As each figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions.

With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and ink pad, only 10c., 3 sets for 25c., one dozen 90c., by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

JUMPING TELESCOPE.



This is an oblong tube in exact imitation of a telescope. By looking through it, reveals one highly magnified picture of a dancer or other subject. It contains on the side a button, which the victim is told to press for a change of picture.

Instead of another picture appearing, the entire inside part shoots out, as shown in illustration. It is entirely harmless, but gives the victim a genuine scare.

Price, 15c. each; 2 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

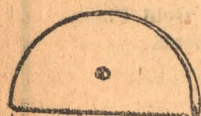
BUBBLE BLOWER.



With this device, a continuous series of bubbles can be blown. It is a wooden, cigar-shaped blower, enclosing a small vial, in which there is a piece of soap. The vial is filled with water, and a peculiarly perforated cork is inserted. When you blow in to the mouthpiece, it sets up a hydraulic pressure through the cork perforations and causes bubble after bubble to come out. No need of dipping into water once the little bottle is filled. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

WHISTLEPHONE



This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of

tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

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TRICK FAN.



A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

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SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer.

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Stung! That was one on you! The joke? You send a friend a letter. He opens it, and that releases the drum. Instantly the sheet of note paper begins to bang and thump furiously, with a ripping, tearing sound. Guaranteed to make a man with iron nerves almost jump out of his skin. You can catch the sharpest wisenheimer with this one. Don't miss getting a few. Price, 6c. each by mail.

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Just out, and one of the most fascinating puzzles on the market. The stunt is to separate the antlers and rejoin them. It looks easy, but try it and you will admit that it is without exception the best puzzle you have ever seen. You can't leave it alone. Made of silvered metal. Price, 12c.; 3 for 30c., sent by mail, postpaid.

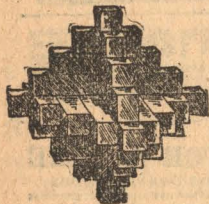
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WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



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This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

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to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

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A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown. Price by mail, 15c.

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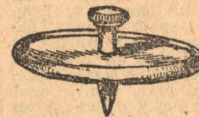


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Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top on the market.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

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DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

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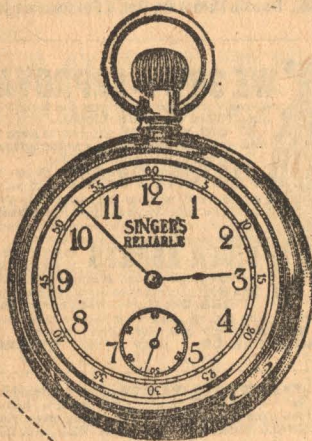
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